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The Revenant • Black Mass • Steve Jobs • Carol • The Danish Girl

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Galadriel meets Lisbeth Salander! No, it's not rubbish slash fiction, it's Todd Haynes' achingly elegant rom-dram.

90 **OSCARS SPECIAL DIRECTORS**

Miller, McCarthy, Russell. Three helmers to watch this drink-champagne-and-thank-your-agent season.

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Johnny Depp plays true-life murder-git Whitey Bulger. Kids won't be going as him to fancy-dress parties.

96 **OSCARS SPECIAL THE DANISH GIRL**

Alicia Vikander and Eddie Redmayne, in a film that has nothing to do with pastry.

100 **OSCARS SPECIAL ACTORS**

Cranston, Hiddleston, Rylance. In contention for the award we like to call 'Best Male Pretendy Person'.

102 **OSCARS SPECIAL STEVE JOBS**

Danny Boyle, Aaron Sorkin and Michael Fassbender are not very PC.

108 **ROAR**

Or, So You Decided To Make A Movie With 100-Odd Carnivores And Now A Lion's Eating Your Face.



Clockwise from above: Enchantress (Cara Delevingne) takes a bath — loofah not in shot; Idris Elba — Loofah definitely in shot; Jessica Jones (Krysten Ritter): sulkyhero.



Regulars

9 **PREMIERE**

Cub scouts versus zombies. Mark Wahlberg versus Will Ferrell. Gaspar Noé versus common decency. Man, our news section's really confrontational this month.

38 **HOW MUCH IS A PINT OF MILK?**

Hannibal's Tooth Fairy, Richard Armitage. Good to see he's put all that height back on after playing Thorin Oakenshield.

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123 **REVIEW**

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140 **THE MOVIE QUIZ**

This month we test your knowledge of the *Hobbit* trilogy. Here's a warm-up question: Complete the film title: *The Desolation Of...* A) *Maud*, B) *The Rhythm Nation*, or C) *Sebastian The Hedgehog*.

162 **CLASSIC SCENE**

Grizzly Man — Werner Herzog's masterpiece documentary on tragic ursinophile Timothy Treadwell. Not to be confused with *The Bad News Bears*.

• SPINE LINE WINNERS: 317 "YOU'RE NOT JAMES BOND, I'M NOT BLOfeld. NO MORE EXPLANATIONS, AND NO LAST-MINUTE ESCAPES" IS FROM THE BREED. • CONGRATULATIONS TO DANIEL REED, WELWYN GARDEN CITY, MATT ROBERTS, HAVERHILL, BELLE WILLIAMS, BROUGHTON, ADAM POTTER, OSSETT, LAURA PATMORE, SEVENOAKS, SARAH PURDY, TROD, ROS WEBB, WINCHESTER, DOUGLAS ROBSON, CANTHESSE, GEMMA RICHARDS, NORFOLK FLEET AND ASHLEY WEDDELL, CHESTER.



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DECEMBER 2015

009

PREMIERE

THE FACE

FRESH BATCH

BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH
JUST CAN'T STOP

 CERTAINLY HAVE been a bit busy of late." Even by Benedict Cumberbatch's standards of charmingly British self-deprecation, this is a rather huge understatement. His current projects include, but are not entirely limited to: playing Johnny Depp's brother in *Black Mass*; finishing his sold-out run as Hamlet on the London stage; playing Richard III on TV; reprising *Sherlock Holmes* for the BBC's Christmas special; becoming Shere Khan in Andy Serkis' *Jungle Book: Origins*; prepping for Marvel's *Doctor Strange*. Oh, and he's just become a father.

"It must look like a crazy whirlwind," he offers. "The roles do bleed into each other a bit. I suddenly realised, when getting into character as Shere Khan, that I was giving myself a hump on the same side as I did for Richard III."

Would he not like to iron his humps out a bit? "I think there's a line of *Sherlock*'s where he says, 'A change of work is as good as a rest.'" So he won't be booking that cruise just yet. **OR**

BLACK MASS IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 27.



FIRST LOOK EXCLUSIVE!

ET TU, ETHAN?

THE COENS RELOCATE TO '50S HOLLYWOOD WITH *HAIL, CAESAR!*

OOD THINGS, SUCH as George Clooney lying on a recliner dressed in a toga, come to those who wait. And as far as *Hail, Caesar!*, the latest from Joel and Ethan Coen, is concerned, it's been quite a wait.

The film was first mooted back in 2004, when Clooney mentioned that it was going to be their next movie; the closer to the 'Numbskull Trilogy' that so far included *O Brother, Where Art*

Thou? and *Intolerable Cruelty*, and which boasted Clooney playing, well, a numbskull. There was just one small problem. "It doesn't even exist as a script," sighed Joel at the time. "It's only an idea. We kind of teased George with the opportunity to play another numbskull. He was totally up for it."

That idea was a movie set in 1920s Hollywood (a decade before Barton Fink arrived in town), and concerned the troubled production of a studio epic set in ancient Rome. But as it turns out, it also went away for a few

years while the brothers focused on other projects. By the time Joel and Ethan came back to it, the Numbskull Trilogy already had a third part, in the guise of 2008's *Burn After Reading*. Trilogies can come in four parts, though — just ask Douglas Adams.

This version of *Hail, Caesar!* differs from the 2004 vintage, it seems, in one key area: the time period. Now, it's set in 1950s Hollywood, and centres on Eddie Mannix, a Hollywood fixer based on legendary private eye Fred Otash (inspiration for Jack Nicholson's Jake >



PREMIERE

DECEMBER 2015

011



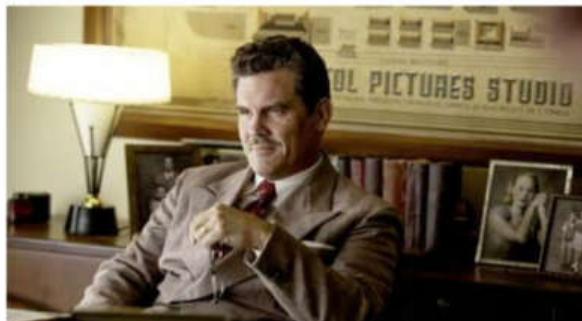
Gittes in *Chinatown*) in the guise of Josh Brolin. Mannix is investigating the mysterious disappearance of Clooney's Baird Whitlock, the preening star of the studio's latest movie, a Roman epic called — you've got it — *Hail, Caesar!*

So far, so numbskull. Yet, surprisingly, Carter Burwell, the Coens' regular composer, claims the film is "not actually funny. It's serious". But here's Ralph Fiennes, who plays a director called Laurence Lorenz. "It was two, three days," he tells us. "I had one fantastic cameo. It was comedic." Who to believe? According to the pathologically non-committal Ethan Coen, "It's about the movie business and life and religion and faith. It's still George."

Indeed, it's Clooney who seems to shift the plot into gear when Whitlock is kidnapped by a sinister organisation known as The Future. And he is most definitely a numbskull. So we shouldn't take that "serious" too seriously. The film is clearly operating in the mode of *Burn After Reading* or *The Big Lebowski*, with kidnapping, mad conspiracies and a bumbling gumshoe at its heart.

Take a beady eye to the trailer and the Coenisms stack up. You'll no doubt have spotted Fred Melamed from *A Serious Man* and Michael Lerner, who played studio gasbag Jack Lipnick in *Barton Fink*. Is he still possibly playing Jack Lipnick?

Despite the Coens' propensity for transforming A-listers into total idiots, it seems everybody in Hollywood is involved. As well as Brolin, Clooney and Fiennes, there's Channing Tatum as a fresh-faced star currently shooting a musical, including such numbers as



Above: Channing Tatum, Scarlett Johansson and Josh Brolin in *Hail, Caesar!*

Merrily We Can Dance. (Burwell mentions a "tap dance water number".)

Scarlett Johansson plays an Esther Williams-style aquatic darling, while Tilda Swinton portrays real-life gossip columnist Hedda Hopper. And then there's Dolph Lundgren. In a Coen brothers movie. What's the rumpus?

"They called me out of nowhere," he admits. "They wanted someone to play a submarine commander. So I'm wearing a Russian fur hat and I'm on this submarine in Malibu." That Coen brothers feeling can't get here soon enough. **IAN NATHAN**

HAIL, CAESAR! IS OUT ON FEBRUARY 26, 2016.



Steve Zahn has joined the cast of *War For The Planet Of The Apes*. He'll be a monkey mate of Andy Serkis' Caesar. Not Tar-Zahn.



Ant-Man is finally getting a partner. Not Dec-Man — Paul Rudd and Evangeline Lilly will team up for *Ant-Man And The Wasp*.



Fact: the 'F' in F. Gary Gray stands for 'Fast&Furious8'. Handily, that's also the name of the movie he's just been hired to direct.



Seth Grahame-Smith will direct Ezra Miller as *The Flash*, due in 2018. Get a move on, so-called Fastest Man Alive.

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SPECIAL REPORT

BIGGEST FILM EVER?

CAN *THE FORCE AWAKENS* CRUSH *AVATAR*?



N JUST OVER A month, *Star Wars: The Force Awakens* will hit cinemas. There's no doubt that the J. J. Abrams juggernaut will rake in more wealth than we can imagine. (And we can imagine quite a bit.) But will it beat *Avatar* to become the biggest of all time? We asked three box office boffins for their expert opinions.

How much does *The Force Awakens* have to make to *not* be considered a disappointment?

CHARLES GANT, THE GUARDIAN: I think it has to crack \$2 billion. When you consider *Jurassic World* did \$1.66 billion, and *Fast & Furious 7* did \$1.51 billion, we are going to need to see clear blue water between *The Force Awakens* and those movies. If it does crack \$2 billion, it will be only the second film to do so in its first run (*after Avatar*), but that's the level of expectation.

IAN SANDWELL, SCREEN DAILY: The absolute minimum would be \$1 billion worldwide,

but it'll be aiming, at the very least, to be the biggest film of 2015. Currently, that's *Jurassic World*'s \$1.66 billion.

SCOTT MENDELSON, FORBES: I'm sure you'll see "what went wrong?" articles if the film merely fails to top *Jurassic World* and/or doesn't set any major short-term records. You'll see "panic in the sky" coverage if it fails to top \$1 billion worldwide. Realistic "worst case scenario" puts it at around \$1.1 billion, with the caveat that it's more important that the film be good, to further interest in the next decade's worth of *Star Wars* films, than break records.

Can it become the biggest film ever?

GANT: Well, it can. It needs to add more than \$1bn more than *Jurassic World* to beat *Avatar*, and that is a big ask. On the flip side, the global market has gotten a lot bigger since *The Phantom Menace* in 1999.

SANDWELL: I'm not yet as convinced it has a shot at being the biggest film ever, but fully expect that I could be made to look like a fool come early next year!

Kylo Ren and a squad of First Order stormtroopers, on their way to a sold-out screening of *The Force Awakens*.

It's certainly got a shot at being the biggest global launch. Currently *Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows – Part 2* has the three-day record with \$483.2 million.

MENDELSON: Anything is possible, but I severely doubt it. *Jurassic World*, *Avengers Assemble* and *Fast & Furious 7* were all "everything goes right" box office success stories. And yet those films, with the 3D bump and the explosion in worldwide box office potential, couldn't even top the original \$1.8 billion total from *Titanic* back in 1997, let alone the \$2.7 billion for *Avatar*.

Okay, money where your mouth is. How much will it make?

GANT: \$2.5 billion. But, really, who knows?

SANDWELL: I'd be surprised if it made

anything less than \$1.5 billion.

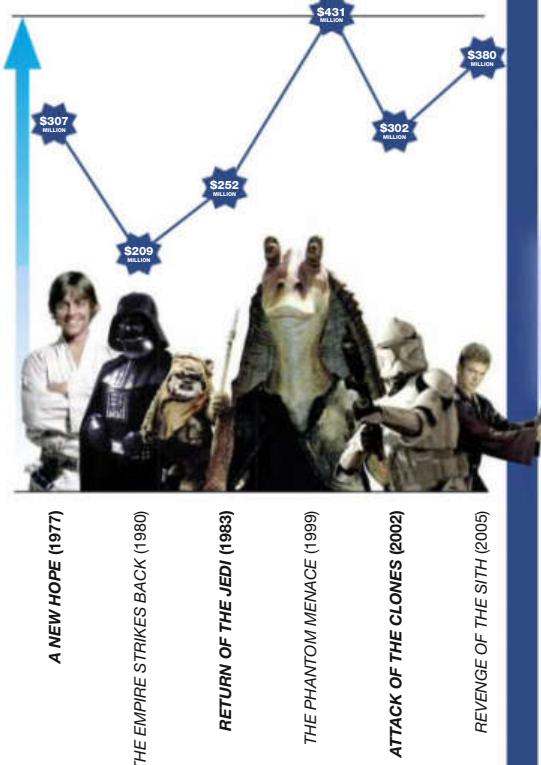
MENDELSON: I would argue that we're looking at a worldwide total of around \$1.4 to \$1.6 billion. **CH**

STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS
IS OUT ON DECEMBER 17.

MOVIE MONEY

THE STAR WARS SAGA GRAPH

(US DOMESTIC BOX OFFICE ONLY)



THE TOP 10 EARNERS

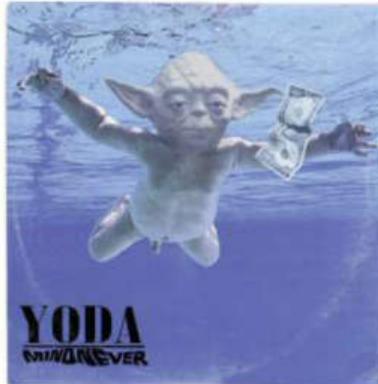
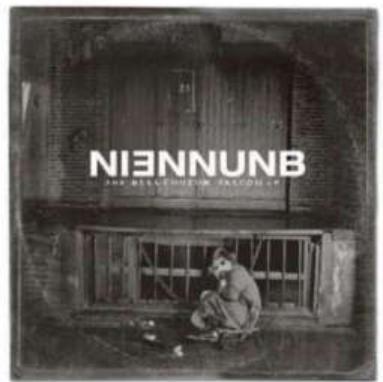
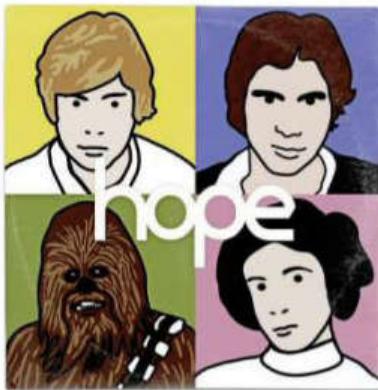
Star Wars Cast Members' Career Total (Domestic)

1. SAMUEL L. JACKSON	\$4.589 BILLION
2. HARRISON FORD	\$3.935 BILLION
3. LIAM NEESON	\$2.941 BILLION
4. FRANK OZ	\$2.148 BILLION
5. EWAN MCGREGOR	\$2.079 BILLION
6. NATALIE PORTMAN	\$2.060 BILLION
7. KEIRA KNIGHTLEY	\$1.490 BILLION
8. CARRIE FISHER	\$1.321 BILLION
9. MARK HAMILL	\$1.236 BILLION
10. CHRISTOPHER LEE	\$992 MILLION

DID YOU KNOW?

No *Star Wars* film has grossed a billion dollars worldwide in its first run. Until now...?

(*THE PHANTOM MENACE* ONLY HIT THAT BARRIER WHEN IT WAS RE-RELEASED IN 2012)



FOR THE RECORD

LP-30

CLASSIC ALBUMS,
STAR WARS-STYLE

LUR'S GREATEST hits, but with Han, Luke, Leia and Chewie. *The Marshall Mathers LP*, now featuring Nien Nunb. And AC/DC's *For*

Those About To Rock, reimagined with the world's favourite astromech droid.

These beautifully designed *Star Wars* album covers are the brainchild of British graphic designer Steven Lear. We liked them so much we asked him to create a selection just for us. You can enjoy the rest of his collection via his Instagram account, @whythelongplayface. Perhaps while relaxing to the strains of *Teen Spirit*, *Smells Like* from Yoda's *Mindnever*. [CH](#)



EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

MR. NSFW

GASPAR NOÉ, THE MOST SHOCKING MAN IN MOVIES, IS BACK

ASPAR NOÉ IS ON the verge of launching into an anecdote about a Brazilian transsexual when the phone line cuts out. Seconds earlier he regaled *Empire* with an admission that he was “drunk, drunk, drunk” when he went up the red carpet at the Cannes premiere of his 3D porn film, *Love*, earlier this year. Both stories sum up the Argentinian-born, Paris-based provocateur in a nutshell.

This is the man, after all, who has carved a career out of pushing the boundaries across a relatively sparse filmography (just four films in 17 years), with sex and violence hitting you like a fire extinguisher to the face. *Love* is the apex of that. Real sex has become more common on the big screen over the last decade, but Noé really goes for it with this story of a young film student (Karl

Glusman) who recalls his tempestuous relationship with his ex (Aomi Muyock). Whether it’s group sex in a fetish club, or multiple scenes of ejaculation, Noé doesn’t shy away from the nitty-gritty. Heaven knows if this would have been the same movie had Noé secured his original choices — Monica Bellucci and Vincent Cassel. “For years, every single love story that I’ve seen on screen, or every single melodrama, was avoiding the tactile part of the sexual relationship,” explains the 51-year-old after we re-establish the connection. “There are not many movies that show that. Many years ago you could have a film like *Don’t Look Now* by Nicolas Roeg or the Japanese film *In The Realm Of The Senses*, but since that period of sexual liberation there’s almost been nothing that explores the most important part of human relationships.”

Over the blower, Noé is quite sweet, playful company, and *Love* itself is surprisingly light. He maintains that he’s not on a crusade to create headlines. “Many people want to do movies dealing with, well, not taboos as such, but stronger subjects and stronger images,” he says. “I would just say that I’m lucky that I can self-censor less than others.” DW

LOVE IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 20.

Above: Aomi Muyock’s Electra, Karl Glusman’s Murphy and the most strategically placed blue circle in *Empire* history.



THE ART OF LOVE

DESIGNER LAURENT LUFROY ON THOSE EYE-POPPING POSTERS



→ ANY DOUBTS THAT NOÉ would be going all-out with *Love* swiftly evaporated when the film debuted four controversial posters in Cannes. *Empire* is made of sterner stuff than most, but even we can’t show them all in case society crumbles.

“We came up with four visuals, based on and using photos that Gaspar had, which we retouched and reshot,” explains designer Laurent Lufroy. “The first was a close-up of three tongues.” Not too bad. “Then there was one with a girl’s mouth with her thumb on it.” Slightly more risqué, but okay. “Then we had a shot of an arse with some knickers that looked like they’d been soiled by sperm.” Steady on! “Then we had the fourth one, which was an ejaculating cock.” Nurse, the screens!

The posters were created before the film was shot, with the intent that they would be replaced. “We decided to make the posters from actual scenes in the film after it was shot,” explains Lufroy, “but one of the actors had the right of veto and wouldn’t let us use them.” Spoilsport.

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AND REMEMBER THEM VERY ACCURATELY.
I THINK THAT EVEN THE WAY IN WHICH
A MAN SHAVES IN THE MORNING
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(2013)

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(2010)

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“We fucked up.”

THE HANGOVER

“You have to do everything
you can, you have to work
your hardest, and if you do,
if you stay positive, you have
a shot at a silver lining.”

SILVER LININGS PLAYBOOK

“Well, now I'm standing. Happy?
We're all standing now. Bunch of
jackasses, standing in a circle.”

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY

COOPER BY NUMBERS

3



CONSECUTIVE ACTING OSCAR NOMINATIONS FROM 2013-2015 (*Silver Linings Playbook*, *American Hustle*, *American Sniper*)



2

AVENGERS WORKED WITH

29



THE AGE AT WHICH HE QUIT DRINKING



14

HIS SHOE SIZE

HIS FIRST ROLE



AS JAKE ON A 1999 EPISODE OF *SEX AND THE CITY*. HE COPPED OFF WITH SARAH JESSICA PARKER BUT DIDN'T SEAL THE DEAL.

NOT TO BE CONFUSED WITH

BRAD COOPER

Australian Olympic swimming champion

PREMIERE

DECEMBER 2015

019



HE TOOK ARGUABLY THE MOST FAMOUS SELFIE OF THE 21ST CENTURY.

DEAD RINGER

Cooper does impressions of the following celebrities:

Bill Clinton Owen Wilson Robert De Niro Christopher Walken



Best and worst US box office (adjusted for inflation)

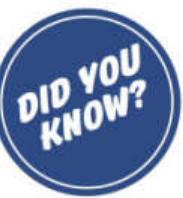
\$350,126,372

→ *American Sniper* ←



\$83,361

→ *Midnight Meat Train* ←



He's appeared on *Inside The Actors Studio* more than any other person bar James Lipton... but on a technicality. As a student at the Studio, he was actually in the audience for the Robert De Niro and Sean Penn episodes. He did eventually have his own episode in 2011.

TRIVIA

- In Israel, *The Hangover* is known as *Stopping In Vegas On The Way To A Wedding*.



- Cooper speaks fluent French, and has appeared on chat shows in France speaking the language. Show-off.

- He won a Golden Raspberry Award in 2010 — Worst Screen Couple for *All About Steve*, with Sandra Bullock.



THE ROCKET LIST

He's one of 11 actors to have voiced Rocket Raccoon over the years.

Jonny Rees	Bradley Cooper
Steve Blum	Kyle Jordan
John DiMaggio	Bret Newton
Nolan North	John Alexander
Billy West	Seth Green
Trevor Devall	

BEST OF TIMES/WORST OF TIMES

NICK FROST

ON GOING TOPLESS FOR QT, TATTOOS AND BEING BOOED BY BUILDERS

BEST



WORST



COSTUME

Ed's costume from *Shaun Of The Dead*. That's essentially what I wear. House shorts and a T-shirt. There was one that said 'Bumpin' Donuts' in a Dunkin' Donuts font, but I think they said we couldn't use it, which was a shame.

The costume on *Snow White & The Huntsman*. It's a beautiful costume, designed by Colleen Atwood, but it's so friggin' hot. There's layer upon layer of thick wool and armour, and it takes ages to get it on. Someone has to do my boots up!

When I did the whole showdance during *Cuban Fury*, at Koko in Camden. Doing that was amazing. I had to go off in the corner and have a little cry, I was so proud of myself.

MOMENT



On the second series of *Spaced*, there was a scene between Simon (Pegg) and I that I hadn't marked up in my script. It took about four-and-a-half hours. I couldn't get one line out without stopping.

On *Paul*, me and Simon had a guy doing day security. He came up one day and said, "Would you sign my arm?" I did mine really big, and he came back four hours later and had had it tattooed on. I felt really guilty that I did it extremely big.

FAN ENCOUNTER

There's a type of person who's a pain in the bum. "My mate reckons you're on telly." Or "My mate says you're famous, but I've never seen you." If you start with that, you usually get short shrift. I don't hold back.

On *The Huntsman*, we were at a place in Gloucestershire called Puzzlewood. It inspired Tolkien to write *The Lord Of The Rings*. I was walking around dressed as a dwarf thinking, "This is fucking great."



LOCATION



On *The World's End*, we shot the catacombs scenes in a concrete tube 100 feet under the ground, and there were no lifts. At the end of the week you felt like Gollum. You hadn't seen any sun.

I did an audition for *Death Proof*, to play the part Quentin Tarantino ended up playing, the barman. We were shooting *Hot Fuzz* and I had to put myself on tape and weirdly I did it topless. I thought he'd find it funny, but I never heard anything back...

AUDITION

I was once made to do a 90-minute improv for a film I didn't get. The director was a real piece of work and said some weird things. CH

NICK FROST'S TRUTHS, HALF TRUTHS AND LITTLE WHITE LIES: A MEMOIR IS OUT NOW.



Despite being a big Beatles fan, Robert Zemeckis has never visited the zebra crossing outside Abbey Road. Sort it out, Bob.



If you're pregnant, Jeff Goldblum will bless your child while doing an impression of Vito Corleone.



Rob Lowe has just discovered the phrase, "It's all gone a bit Pete Tong," and loves saying it. What a load of Steve Wright.



Matthew McConaughey's brother Rooster has named his kids Miller Lyte and Margarita. Alright alright alright.



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more attractive.

Well, one out of
two isn't bad.



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FIRST LOOK EXCLUSIVE!

NETFLIX AND KILL

MEET JESSICA JONES, THE NEW
MARVEL HERO ON THE BLOCK



If there's one criticism constantly leveled at Marvel, it's that, 12 movies in, the comic book colossus still hasn't let a female hero fly solo.

The small screen is a different story. Just two shows into Netflix's deal with Marvel, and the MNTU (Marvel/Netflix Televisual Universe) is showing its big brother the way with *Jessica Jones*, which follows Krysten Ritter's superpowered private eye as she puts wrongs to right in New York.

Today, though, the wrongs are winning. *Empire* is on set for a climactic scene, so let's just say things have not gone well for Jessica in her battle against David Tennant's psychic psychopath Zebediah Kilgrave, aka the Purple Man. The threat of death hangs in the air. Then director Michael Rymer calls, "Cut!" and Ritter leaps to her feet with a hearty cry of, "Nailed it!"

"I get to be really strong," says Ritter. "I get to be vulnerable. I get to be funny. Mostly, I get to walk around looking like a badass and beat the shit out of people!"

As evidenced by our exclusive shot of Jessica tackling NYPD detective Will Simpson, and the pockmarked walls and a shattered glass door in her apartment. "I could punch somebody and throw them through a wall 20 feet away!" laughs Ritter. Now there's something you don't see on *Midsomer Murders*. JW

JESSICA JONES IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 20.



PREMIERE

DECEMBER 2015

023

Jonesing for
a punch: Wil Traval
and Krysten Ritter.

THE INSIDE TRACK

▼
Jessica is a relatively new Marvel character. She first appeared in Brian Michael Bendis and Michael Gaydos' *Alias* in 2001.

MOVIE MASTERMIND

BRAD BIRD

WILL THE PIXAR GENIUS GET AN INCREDIBLES SCORE?

WORDS NICK DE SEMLYEN

1 Three movie characters are wielded as weapons in the store fight in *Tomorrowland: A World Beyond*. Which ones?

One of them is Gort from *The Day The Earth Stood Still*. The Millennium Falcon gets clunked over somebody's head.

Then there's a spear from *Star Trek*. So that's three, but they're not all people.

1/2 The correct answer is Gort, Han Solo and R2-D2.

2 You have a voice cameo in *Jurassic World* as the monorail announcer.

What comment do you make about the entrance gate?

That it's made from the wood of the original Jurassic Park gate. Colin (Trevorrow) and I decided this guy was an aspiring actor, who prepares for every monorail announcement as if it's a great performance.

✓ CORRECT

3 List every city seen in *Mission: Impossible – Ghost Protocol* in order.

The beginning is... Budapest? Second one is Moscow. Then Dubai... Mumbai... (long pause)... San Francisco and Seattle.

✓ CORRECT

4 What's the name of the laxative that Hogarth puts on Mansley's ice cream in *The Iron Giant*?

Choco-Lax. No — Coco-Lax! We haven't had offers from laxative companies yet, but the tie-in possibilities are amazing.

✓ CORRECT

5 You directed the *Do The Bartman* music video. Can you complete this stanza: "Yo! Hey, what's happening, dude?"

"I'm the something known for being



rude." God, man, you're really making me go back! *Do The Bartman* is not on my iPod.

1/2 The correct answer is, "I'm the guy with the rep for being rude."

6 In *Family Dog*, your episode of *Amazing Stories*, what outfit does terrifying dog trainer Gerte LeStrange wear?

Well, it's black and kinda pointy-looking. That's not something I've revisited for a while. Mercedes McCambridge was amazing as Gerte.

1/2 It's a black frock with bone insignia on the front.

7 How does Splashdown meet his end in *The Incredibles'* no-capes montage?

Sucked into a vortex.

✓ CORRECT

8 Which wine does Anton Ego order to go with his dinner in *Ratatouille*?

I think it was Château Lafite. Oh, it's Cheval Blanc? If somebody really wants to be a dick and they know you're paying for dinner, that's the wine they order!

✗ INCORRECT It's a Cheval Blanc 1947.

9 In *Jack-Jack Attack*, the babysitter puts on music by which composer?

Mozart. There were studies that went out that Mozart stimulated your baby's imagination. Classical music, wine... In case you're getting the idea that I'm sophisticated, I'm not at all. I'm a sophisticated burger-eater!

✓ CORRECT

10 Who says, "Welcome to America!" to the aliens in *"batteries not included"*?

I have a screenplay credit but didn't write that line. Is it the Hume Cronyn character? It is? Boom!

✓ CORRECT Cronyn's character name is Frank Riley.

TOMORROWLAND: A WORLD BEYOND
IS OUT NOW ON BLU-RAY, DVD AND
DIGITAL DOWNLOAD.

SCORECARD DIRECTORS



Robert Rodriguez	9
David O. Russell	8.5
Quentin Tarantino	8.5
Guillermo del Toro	8.5
Werner Herzog	8.5
Bryan Singer	8
John Waters	8
BRAD BIRD	7.5
Dario Argento	7
Peter Bogdanovich	7
Roger Corman	7
Richard Linklater	7
George A. Romero	7
John Landis	6.5
Paul Schrader	6.5
Cameron Crowe	6
Baz Luhrmann	6
Judd Apatow	5
Terry Gilliam	5
Jim Sheridan	5
Roland Emmerich	4.5
Wes Craven	4
John Carpenter	3
John Woo	3

BRAD SCORES

7 1/2 / 10

"That was a little nerve-wracking. I expected to be right down there with Alan Smithee on the scoreboard. I'm kicking myself about Gerte's bones."



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Corin Hardy and some of *The Hallow*'s title stars. Yes, he's the one in the middle.

PROFILE

HALLOW THERE

MEET CORIN HARDY: HORROR'S NEXT BIG THING

ORIN HARDY
doesn't have a
tattoo, but if he did
it would be of one
word: "resilient".
"The last time I saw
Ray Harryhausen,

I had lunch with him in Edinburgh," says Hardy. "He suddenly said to me, 'Are you resilient? In this industry, you gotta be resilient!'"

Resilience has never been a problem for Hardy. The Brighton-based filmmaker has been knocking on the door of the movie industry for over a decade now. First there was a selection of acclaimed music videos with the likes of The Prodigy and McFly, then came a close call with Yeti horror *The Refuge*, which Sam Raimi was once on board to produce. But, it seemed, Hardy just couldn't get a film off the ground.

The Hallow changes all that. A creepy supernatural siege movie about malevolent fairies running amok in an Irish wood, it's brought Hardy to the attention of Hollywood, securing him the directing gig on the reboot of *The Crow*. Not bad for an idea he first had a decade ago. Way to go, resilience. "I always had this idea of a fairy-tale home-invasion movie," he says. "I wanted to show fairies not how we see them in, say, Disney films, but Irish folklore tales of these much darker, human-sized creatures. I don't want to replicate what's come before in terms of creatures."



The Refuge will be next, should *The Crow* continue to linger in development (see right), and Hardy promises "a grand adventure story. I want to do a monster movie about a Yeti and make it terrifying, intelligent and strange."

Many directors pop their cherry in horror as a means to an end, but Hardy is in for the long haul. "I always wanted to make a horror film," he says. "Great horror movies are the great movies, to me. The dark side of things is more appealing." CH

THE HALLOW IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 13.

"I DON'T THINK IT'S CURSED..."

CORIN HARDY UPDATES US ON *THE CROW*

HARDY SECURED A DREAM gig when he agreed to direct *The Crow* reboot. After all, he even used to dress up as Brandon Lee's Eric Draven from the 1994 movie.

The film was on course to shoot this year, with Jack Huston on board to star. But when backers Relativity filed for bankruptcy in July, Huston left and *The Crow* went into limbo. Given the chequered history of the project, including Lee's tragic on-set death, it's easy to draw a morbid conclusion...

Is *The Crow* cursed?

Having just made an independent movie that took eight years to make, it feels the opposite. I don't believe that the

production is cursed. That would be terrible.

How close were you to making the movie? I had a full cast of actors coming together. We were set up in Pinewood Studios in Wales. I had my offices and art team ready. It's been a strange couple of months adjusting.

What's the appeal of *The Crow* to you? It's not a horror, but it has horrific elements and a very emotional current running through it. It's got romance and beauty and poetic qualities, but it's very violent and thrilling and has a lot of depth.

Have you found the new *Crow* yet? I've got someone in mind who would be a fresh and inspired decision. It's not who you think...





Five Things

PAUL BETTANY

→ HE'S CALLING THE SHOTS

"I wanted to have a first-time filmmaker's experience," says Paul Bettany of *Shelter*. And he got it, shooting the romance between Jennifer Connelly's "junkie prostitute" and Anthony Mackie's "ex-terrorist Muslim" over just 21 days. "People don't want to give you lots of money to make this kind of film," he admits.

→ HE'S KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

"I kept the time-honoured tradition of sleeping with the leading lady," he laughs of casting his wife. But it was far from a holiday. "We were shooting in a filthy alleyway. Props had a retractable syringe that was wrong. So she took a real needle and put it in her fucking vein. I went, 'I guess we'll roll on this!'"

→ HE'S A NEW YORKER NOW

The movie is set in New York, where the London-born Bettany has lived for over a decade. "I absolutely still feel British," he says. "But within five years you're a New Yorker, drinking too much caffeine and swearing at cab drivers. You can be a New Yorker and also preserve the place you're from."

→ HE'S QUITE A VISION

After years voicing J.A.R.V.I.S. in the Marvel movies, Bettany moved onto the screen as The Vision in *Avengers: Age Of Ultron*. He will return in *Captain America: Civil War*, which may answer a big question: does The Vision have a willy? "The man can shoot a fucking beam out of his head. I'm sure he can figure out genitals!"

→ HE'S LOYAL TO A FAULT

Bettany repaid an old debt with his uncredited cameo in Brian Helgeland's *Legend*. "On *A Knight's Tale*, the studio didn't want me. Brian flew me out to audition, they sent me home and he flew me out again! Which was lovely." CH

SHELTER IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 27.



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BEAT THE PARENTS

IT'S FERRELL VERSUS WAHLBERG IN *DADDY'S HOME*

ILL FERRELL HAS KNOWN MARK Wahlberg since they started work on *The Other Guys* in 2009. So Ferrell is clearly the go-to guy for goss on one of the toughest men in Hollywood. So spill, Will. "Mark is very into Pomeranians," says Ferrell. "He's got about 30 of them. Completely untrained.

They just run wild. I'm surprised they're not here right now." Wahlberg saunters across and shoots Ferrell a look. "They're in your trailer," he deadpans. "Taking a shit."

And what has Wahlberg learned about Ferrell in their years of friendship? "Will likes to get naked a lot," he sighs.

Today, though, Ferrell is very much clothed when we pitch up at New Orleans' magnificent aquarium, where the pair are reuniting for *Daddy's Home*, a comedy which sees them play a father and step-father locked in a battle for their kids' affections. The scene they're shooting neatly encapsulates their relationship. Attempting to school a group of seven-year-olds on the habits of the manta ray, Ferrell's 'super parent' Brad, the stepfather, is effortlessly derailed by Wahlberg's punk-rock prodigal dad, Dusty.

"What's so great about these guys," says Wahlberg, "is that they actually like each other. Dusty could've just been a dick. But Brad being so genuinely sweet and Dusty really liking him makes it much more interesting."

Much the same could be said of the Wahlberg-Ferrell dynamic, we venture. "Will is a sweet genuine guy," says Wahlberg of his sparring partner. "My old self would've been a dick to him, but he knows how much I like him."

"Mark's favourite movie is *Bewitched*," says Ferrell. "He watches it all the time."

"I do," nods Wahlberg. "And I kiss you on the screen..." This could be the continuation of a beautiful friendship. **SB**

DADDY'S HOME IS OUT ON DECEMBER 25.

FIRST LOOK EXCLUSIVE!



1

1. Ferrell and Wahlberg in *Daddy's Home*. 2. The pair enjoy a frank exchange. 3. Director Sean Anders (right) on set. 4. Ferrell and his on-screen wife, Linda Cardellini.



2





THE FUTURE IS ORANGE

WE UNPEEL TANGERINE, THE FIRST iPhone FILM



STORY OF transsexual Hollywood hookers and the Armenian cab drivers who 'frequent' them is not the easiest sell, even if it does

take place on Christmas Eve. But Sean Baker's comedy-drama *Tangerine* is a belter that's been wowing 'em on the festival circuit all year. Not just because it's funny and provocative, but it's also beautifully shot — on an iPhone 5S, of all things. Is this a film made by a pioneer? Or is it just a cheap attention-grabbing gimmick? "It's all about the content," Baker reasons. "Not how you're capturing that content." It gives a whole new meaning to the phrase 'phoning it in'.

Forgoing the found-footage route, the director achieved surprisingly



sophisticated results with the device (and he was able to check Twitter as he went). "Films as cheap as this usually require you to stay indoors with a lot of dialogue," Baker explains, "whereas this film needed to constantly move through LA." Having a minimal crew also helped draw natural performances from first-time actresses Mya Taylor and Kitana Kiki Rodriguez. "A benefit I didn't anticipate," Baker says. "You'd have thought we were just making a home video with our friends."

Moral of the story: if you have a movie bubbling away in your head, but you've never quite made it, you've just run out of excuses. After all, your camera might be in your pocket right now. **OW**

TANGERINE IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 13.

Sean Baker (far right) and DP Radium Cheung direct Micky O'Hagan and Kitana Kiki Rodriguez on the set of *Tangerine*.

THE JUICE

SEAN BAKER'S STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO iFILMING



iPhone \$500

The release of the 6/6S has since addressed this, but using the iPhone 5S meant that Baker was unable to adjust the camera's focal length and could use only a single wide angle. "We bought three iPhones but mostly just used one. With more we ran the risk of capturing another camera in the shot." Other phones are available, of course.

FILMIC PRO APP \$10

This app allows filmmakers to lock aperture and focus and shoot 24 frames per second, with a higher compression rate than the iPhone's native software. "It changes the way your phone captures video," Baker explains.

TIFFEN STEADICAM SMOOTHIE \$150

A mount for the phone allowing for more stable handheld shooting. "It's just a little grip that fits in your hand."

ANAMORPHIC ADAPTOR \$160

Created by Moondog Labs. "It fits over the lens and allows you to shoot true 'Scope. That sold the whole idea for me, because I knew we could elevate it to a cinematic level."

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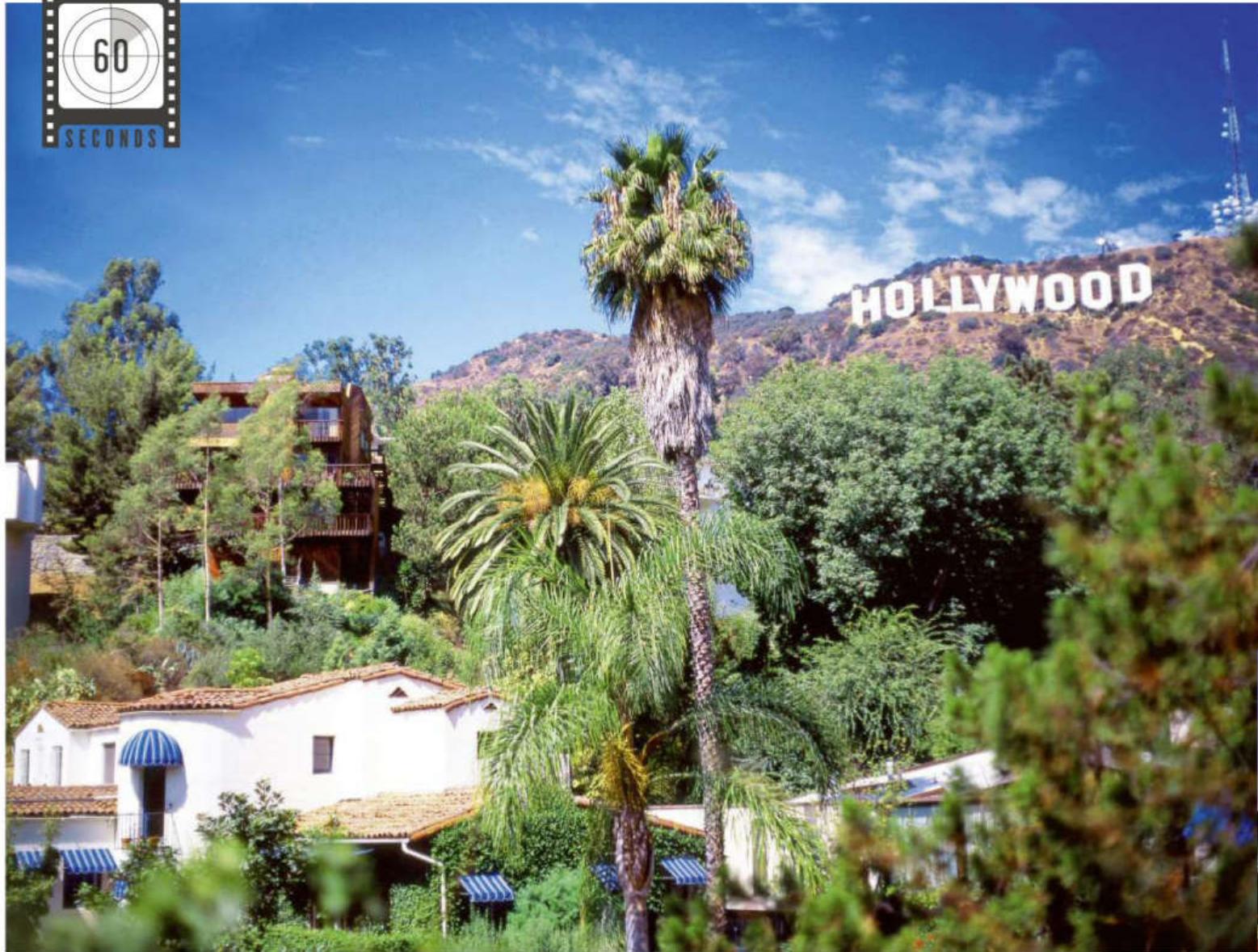
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CORGİ



LA, BABY!

Done In 60 Seconds just got bigger, if not longer



ES, INDEED, GOOD filmmakers in the making. This year's Jameson Empire Done In 60 Seconds competition not only offers the winner

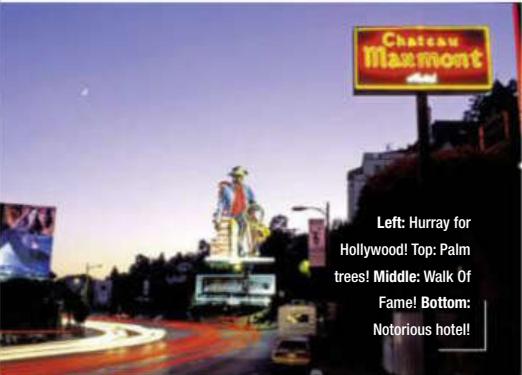
a gateway into the world of movies, but also a trip to Los Angeles to attend the Jameson First Shot weekender.

First Shot, for those unaware, is the *other* Jameson competition for burgeoning filmmakers (see panel right), run in conjunction with Kevin Spacey's Trigger Street productions. This competition culminates in two days of master classes from the heart of the business, offering serious advice on how to take the next step into a filmmaking

career. The classes not only discuss the nuts and bolts of production but also feature panels of experts on the selling and publicising of independent films to potential distributors, right down to the intricacies of a title. It's amazing what works.

So the eventual winner of DISS 2016, and a friend, will not only nab two tickets to next year's Jameson Empire Awards, a glorious trophy and the acclaim of their peers, but also the chance to travel to Tinseltown to take part in said Jameson First Shot weekender. Flights, hotels, and transfers are included.

And, as if you needed any reminding, our legendary minute-long film challenge, now in its 100th year (or thereabouts), simply asks you to remake any film of



your choice in no more than 60 seconds. And to give you a brief *Empire* master class: it is all about how you interpret your movie — think funny, think clever, think quickly.

ENTER NOW!

The competition in eligible countries is now open and closes on January 14, 2016. So you don't have long to make your mini-masterpiece and upload it to jamesonempirediss.com. Could be the start of something...



Send the elevator back down...

HOW KEVIN SPACEY AND JAMESON FIRST SHOT ARE PAYING IT FORWARD

"IT ALL STEMS FROM A philosophy handed down to me by Jack Lemmon," begins Kevin Spacey, speaking at this year's First Shot premiere in Los Angeles. "If you have done really well, then it is really valuable that you make sure you pay it forward, as some people like to say. Jack Lemmon used to say, 'Send the elevator back down...'"

It began four years ago, over a few drinks in Dublin, with Spacey keen to repeat the success he had had in mentoring new theatrical talent in his Old Vic New Voices programme in the world of film. Joining forces with Jameson, and his partner at Trigger Street Productions, Dana Brunetti, they created First Shot. Herein prospective filmmakers put forward script ideas for short films, from which three winners are chosen and flown to Los Angeles, where they actually get to make their film with an A-list actor. First Shot also runs an eminently practical series of masterclasses with key industry figures.



Top: Adrien Brody and Kevin Spacey hold court.
Above: The launch of the Jameson First Shot competition at Paramount Studios in Los Angeles.

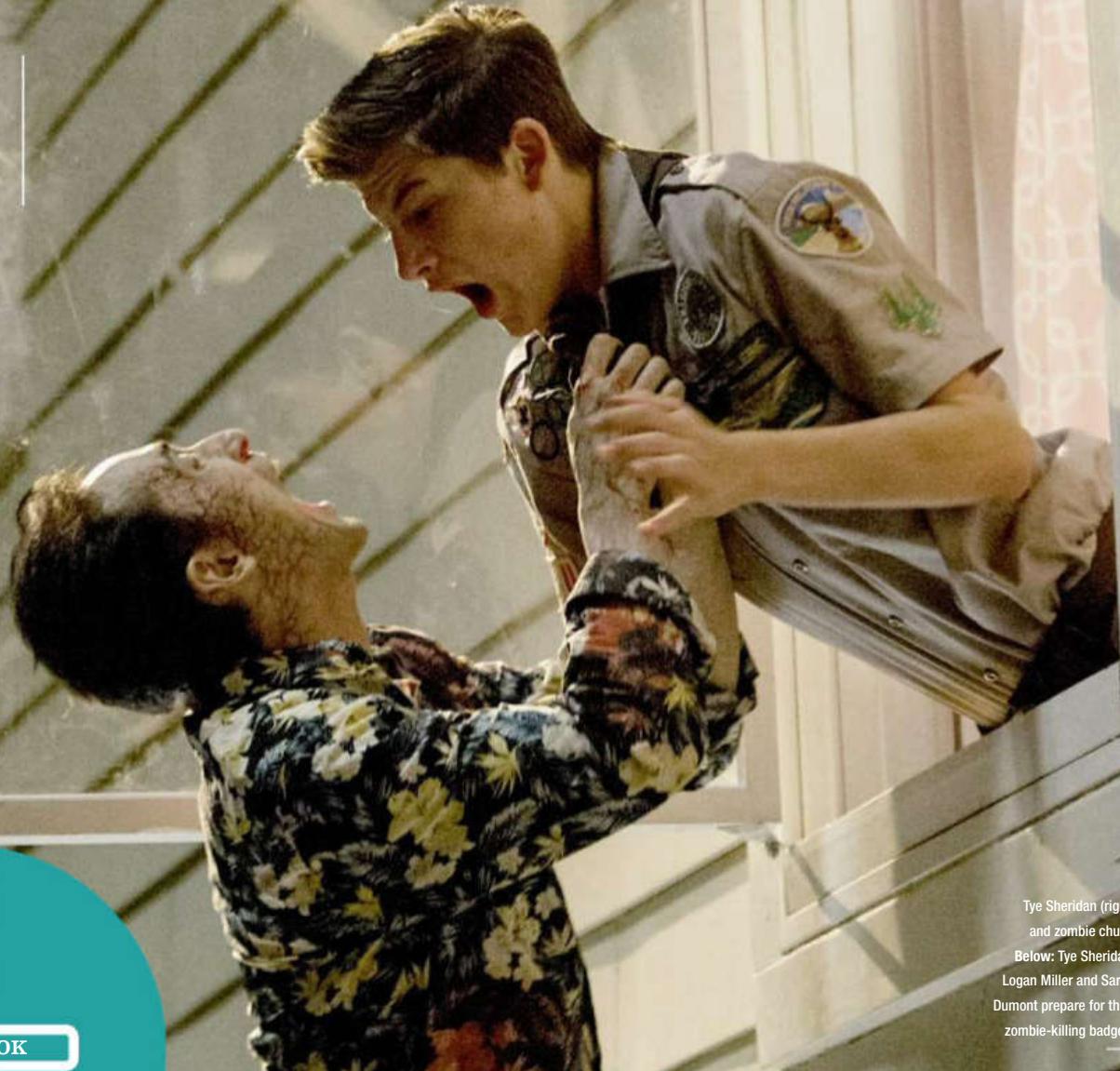
"I was the guinea pig," laughs Spacey, "because you are basically doing something incredibly unusual. You are saying, 'Listen, we have no idea who the directors are going to be, we don't have any scripts yet. Fortunately, we have got a number of brilliant actors to jump off the building with us."

Following Spacey there were Willem Dafoe and Uma Thurman. 2015's winning shorts all star Adrien Brody. Indeed, the winners — Travis Calvert, Mark Middlewick and Stephan Tempier — have made an elegantly directed, original trilogy of Brody-ness (watch them and find out more about entering here: jamesonfirstshot.com).

"They were definitely easy to work with," says Brody. "Being less easy to work with usually comes with experience. There is an experimental aspect to this that I gravitate to. The short format is liberating."

And how did it feel to give notes to an Oscar-winning actor? "Adrien was really receptive," says Tempier. "Although the first time, I was really shitting myself."

Welcome to Hollywood.



Tye Sheridan (right) and zombie chum. Below: Tye Sheridan, Logan Miller and Sarah Dumont prepare for their zombie-killing badges.

FIRST LOOK

BE PREPARED!

FOR SCOUT'S GUIDE TO THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE



HOW TO DESCRIBE *Scout's Guide To The Zombie Apocalypse*? "It's a big titty fest," director Christopher Landon tells *Empire*, while he waits for

a huge explosion to be prepped on the LA set. "There are a lot of pretty crazy set-pieces that involve certain parts of the anatomy, both male and female. I don't know how else to describe it."

Okay... No, wait, he's got another one. "It's *Goonies* with gore!" Better.

However you describe it, it's a safe bet that this is probably not going to be the movie you pictured when you heard that title. Or even the original title, *Boy Scouts Vs Zombies*. This is a more adult, blood-flecked beast — *Evil Dead* meets John Hughes. "When I first heard the title, I thought it was really stupid," admits Landon. "Then I read the script,

and got deeply invested in the story."

That story, then. It's the zombie apocalypse, and the only thing preventing the undead hordes from munching on mankind like so many boxes of cookies is a troupe of dib-dib-dibbers, led by Tye Sheridan. "We're about to save the day!" yells Sheridan. "It's about to go down."

It's the penultimate day of shooting, on the outskirts of LA, and Sheridan and his co-stars, Logan Miller and Joey Morgan, all soaked in "zombie stripper blood", are waiting for the aforementioned explosion. Which is when *Empire* notices their scouts' badges.

"We are in the American Scouts Society," explains Morgan. "The acronym for that could be ASS... And it most definitely is." **AP**

SCOUTS' GUIDE TO THE ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE
IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 6.



A bewigged David Koechner (right) as the Scouts' troupe leader.

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Whose poster did you have on your bedroom wall as a kid? I seem to remember having a *Terminator* poster and a Samantha Fox poster. Put those together in a movie! That'd be crazy.

Do you have a nickname? If I tell you that then people will start calling me it on social media and it's very personal, so I can't say that. My brother used to get called 'Armo'. It sounds Australian, doesn't it?

How much is a pint of milk? I think it's about £1.70. No? 89p? On the website I just Googled, St. Ives cultured buttermilk costs... oh, wait a minute, that's buttermilk. (*Laughs*) I did cheat slightly on that one. I've got my iPad in front of me. I don't really drink milk.

Have you ever punched a director? (*Laughs*) No, never. Have I had a row with a director? I've had some butt-clenching moments where I've banged my head against the wall. But what's the point? You don't get anything achieved.

What was the last TV show you gave up on? Oh God. You know what? I'm going to say *Game Of Thrones*. I started watching it when I'd just finished on *The Hobbit* and I think it was just too much fantasy for me. I'm sure I'll come back to it, but I'd had too much of wigs and dragons and all that kind of thing. I was dragoned out.

How far did you get? I didn't get far at all. Everyone says it's worth watching but the more people say that, the more it makes you want to watch *House Of Cards* again.

On a scale of one to ten, how hairy is your arse? I beg your pardon? There is no way I am answering that question. No way on this earth. Who wants to know the answer to that?

Well... And are you talking about cheeks or crack? The answer to that question is in episode 11 of *Hannibal*.

Do you have any scars? I have a scar between my eyebrows, which I got on *The Hobbit*. I have a feeling it might be with me forever. I caught myself



HOW MUCH IS A PINT OF MILK?

Richard Armitage

THE HOBBIT STAR TALKS AN UNEXPECTED CHURNING

PORTRAIT MITCHELL NGUYEN MCCORMACK

between the eyes with the little hook on the Orcrist sword, and it sliced through the prosthetic and went through a flap of skin between my eyebrows. We stopped it bleeding and then when I took the prosthetic off, it reopened the wound and I put a sticky plaster on it. I probably should have got stitches.

What was the last movie you paid to see? *Ex Machina*. Money well spent.

What's the stupidest question you've ever been asked? I think it's probably, "On a scale of one to ten, how hairy is your arse?"

What's in your pocket right now? (*Laughs*) Nothing. My genitals are in my pocket right now.

What's the worst thing you've ever eaten? It was a tiny Amazonian ant. I ate it when I was in São Paulo at a really expensive restaurant, but it was really tasty. It tasted of lemons.

What would you call your autobiography? *My Genitals Are In My Pocket Right Now*. JW

HANNIBAL: SEASON 3 IS OUT ON DVD AND BLU-RAY NOW.

DID YOU KNOW?

He plays the flute.

He suffers from aquaphobia, the fear of drowning. Sounds fair.

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UNMISSABLE ★★★★ EXCELLENT ★★★★ GOOD ★★★★ POOR ★★ TRAGIC ★



Steve Jobs



OUT NOVEMBER 13 / CERT. TBC / 122 MINS.

DIRECTOR Danny Boyle

CAST Michael Fassbender, Kate Winslet, Seth Rogen, Jeff Daniels

PLOT In the lead up to three product launches, spread over 14 years, we plunge into the mounting crises, both personal and technical, that confront Apple head Steve Jobs (Fassbender).



TEVE JOBS IS thrilling. Which should sound counter-intuitive. Isn't this a film about a man who made computers? Operatic

in scope, breathtakingly articulate, and held firm by a snake-charmer of a central performance, it is, in fact, another ambitious reckoning with a flawed American titan; a sister parable to the Zuckerberg-autopsy *The Social Network*; an intricate, dazzling, zeitgeist-lassoing *Citizen Kane*. Or, if you prefer, *The West Wing* in the tech sphere.



The hook is a backstage drama, *Birdman*'s twitchy Broadway neuroses neatly divided into three acts, each located just as Jobs (Michael Fassbender) is due to unveil his latest game-changer. In 1984, Cupertino buzzes with anticipation for the launch of the Macintosh, the friendly-faced challenge to the supremacy of the PC. But behind-the-scenes he is assailed by breakdowns of all guises, including a wounded ex (Katherine Waterston) trailing a five year-old daughter (Makenzie Moss) she claims is his. In a stunning rendition of Jobs' emotional sangfroid, he has constructed an

algorithm to prove there is a 28 per cent chance she belongs elsewhere. Then his dead gaze flickers into life as the girl, named Lisa, takes to his new computer.

It's a repeated pattern. In 1988, an exile, Jobs prepares to launch his ill-fated NeXT system, while plotting revenge and dealing with a Lisa pressing for the attention he lavishes on his computers. By 1998, the prodigal returned, he is about to establish Apple as chief catalyst of our cultural destiny by giving us the iMac. Late on Jobs chases an infuriated Lisa to a rooftop and points to her boxy Walkman. "We're going to put 500 tunes in your pocket,"

Good Jobs: Michael Fassbender invents the modern world.

he reports, as if that makes things right. The iPod is already cooking in the brain of this man who unerringly grasped the interface between people and objects. It is the connection of people to people that was beyond him.

All of screenwriter Aaron Sorkin's virtuosic scene-construction and supercharged dialogue, drawn from Walter Isaacson's biography, electrifies the wilting biopic into grand Shakespearean tragedy. This is living biography, Jobs' inner-workings not so much psychobabbled as psychobombarded. Jeff Daniels as John Sculley, Apple CEO and great betrayer, repeatedly head-doctors Jobs' twisted roots. "Why do people like you," he wonders, "who were adopted, feel like they were rejected instead of selected?" No-one ever talks like this, not even Steve Jobs, but it makes for soaring drama.

Having Sorkin in full spate doesn't make it less of a Danny Boyle movie. Only a more mature, focused, theatrical Boyle. He lets the talk surge through long, dynamic takes. His camera roams the networks of backstage corridors, riding the currents of high-anxiety. During a boardroom flashback, as Jobs faces downfall, an apocalyptic deluge cascades down the windows. Each of the three eras is shot in time-specific stock. The electronic score follows suit. Everything configures as metaphor.

There's not a flat note in the performances, either. How could the actors not thrill to the music of these lines? Kate Winslet exudes steadiness and sanity as marketing-guru Joanna Hoffman, Jobs' constant confessor. Seth Rogen is a fine Steve Wozniak, Apple's co-founder whining for recognition. "I'm tired of being Ringo," he implores, Sorkin laying bare an entire relationship in a single line, "when I know I'm John."

There is an amusing Venn diagram in the magnificent Fassbender playing Jobs between Macbeth and Magneto. Invoking rather than mimicking the nasal accent and stiff gait, he nails the mesmerising zeal and icy cruelty, but defies the film's search for conclusions. He leaves Jobs fascinatingly elusive, both genius and sociopath. The ultimate closed system. We can see inside, but never know how it works. **IAN NATHAN**

VERDICT *Really smart people on a really smart person: Fassbender, Winslet, Sorkin and Boyle await Oscar nominations. But for all its relevance and grandeur, Steve Jobs is ridiculously entertaining. You might say, user-friendly.*



Kill Your Friends

★★

OUT NOVEMBER 6 / CERT. TBC / 100 MINS.

DIRECTOR Owen Harris

CAST Nicholas Hoult, James Corden, Georgia King

PLOT London, 1997: with Britpop in full swing, A&R man Steven Stelfox (Hoult) struggles to make his way through the music biz minefield, willing to go to any lengths to stay afloat.



HE SHARPER EDGES of former A&R man John Niven's scabrous, black-hearted 2008 novel, a kind of music biz mash-up of *American Psycho* and *The Player*, have been blunted during its transition to the big screen. A year or two ago, one might have added "understandably", but in the post-*Wolf Of Wall Street* world, *Kill Your Friends* feels tame and curiously sexless.

The year is 1997. Britpop and the Spice Girls rule the charts, and A&R executive Steven Stelfox (Nicholas Hoult) is desperate to discover the Next Big Thing in a business that isn't so much dog-eat-dog as, in Niven's words, "dog-gang-rapes-dog-then-tortures-him-for-five-days-before-burying-him-alive-and-

taking-out-every-motherfucker-the-dog-has-ever-known". A coke-addicted, misogynistic misanthrope who's a long way from his last hit record, Stelfox is ready to do whatever it takes for one more day at the expenses-fuelled trough.

Kudos to Hoult for finding himself a rotten plum of a role: with his near-ominpresent voiceover and *House Of Cards*-style asides, he's in virtually every scene. Alas, like the equally game Jude Law in the *Alfie* remake, all the scene-stealing, camera-hogging charisma in the world won't save you if what's unfolding around you is as calamitously misjudged as a wedding singer doing a medley of Rammstein and Throbbing Gristle.

The main problem is that the performances ring so false, even the film's many witty nuggets of music biz wisdom feel contrived and unconvincing. *Kill Your Friends*' other major issue is that, while said industry may be scuzzy, films of this kind are supposed to employ a seductive, aspirational guide to seduce you into their pseudo-glamorous worlds before showing you the dark underbelly. *Kill Your Friends*' depiction of the Britpop-era music business is grubby and deplorable from the get-go, largely due to Harris' sub-'90s-TV direction, cheap-and-nasty cinematography and absence of production value. It could have been this year's *Trainspotting*. Instead, it's a train wreck. **DAVID HUGHES**

VERDICT Nicholas Hoult does his best to bring Niven's weapons-grade scumbag to life, in a film hobbled by amateurish acting and absence of production value.

Bottoms up!



Tangerine

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 13 / CERT. 15 / 86 MINS.

DIRECTOR Sean Baker

CAST Kitana Kiki Rodriguez, Mya Taylor

→ It may be known as The Movie Shot On An iPhone 5, but Sean Baker's hymn to the spirit of the streets has so much more going for it. Two transgender prostitutes, Sin-Dee and Alexandra (Rodriguez, Taylor), strut up and down Santa Monica Boulevard searching for the truth about Sin-Dee's cheating pimp boyfriend, as randy Armenian cab driver Razmik (Karagulian) becomes an increasingly important part of their odyssey. The filmmaking is electric, boasting the vim and verve of a young Scorsese, but equally impressive are the great performances, riotous laughs and the sense of compassion and generosity towards the traditionally marginalised. Terrific stuff. **IF**



Closer To The Moon

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 13 / CERT. 12A / 112 MINS.

DIRECTOR Nae Caranfil

CAST Mark Strong, Vera Farmiga, Harry Lloyd

→ Mark Strong in a Romanian black comedy about a commie-baiting bank heist? *Closer To The Moon* is a curiosity, no doubt — but also a delight. The ever-excellent British actor leads a gang of disillusioned former World War II resistance fighters in a futile fuck-you to the powers-that-be in 1959 Romania. The twist is that when they are caught, the authorities force them to re-enact events for a propaganda film, under the innocent eye of cameraman Harry Lloyd (charming). A strong ensemble embrace the absurdity with gusto. And writer/director Nae Caranfil's unlikely, odd little film is quietly moving — all the more so because it is true. **NP**

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The Lady In The Van

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 13 / CERT. 12A / 104 MINS.

DIRECTOR Nicholas Hytner **CAST** Maggie Smith, Alex Jennings, Jim Broadbent

PLOT Hounded by do-gooders, social workers and Camden Council, playwright Alan Bennett (Jennings) offers his drive as a temporary haven for Miss Shepherd (Smith), a bonkers, opinionated and malodorous old lady who lives in a van. She ends up staying for 15 years.



BASED ON THE “mostly true” book and stage accounts of the peculiar van-lady who took refuge on his property, Alan Bennett’s deceptively

light-hearted brew of social observation and self-examination comes to the screen as modestly as you like. You might say that director Nicholas Hytner has styled his movie to the exact specifications of the famously nebbish personality of his screenwriter-cum-subject matter. Shot in and around the Camden terrace Bennett moved into in the ’70s, showing off is expressly forbidden.

Well, with one exception: like Tom Hardy’s twin Krays of *Legend*, at the heart of the film we find flawlessly rendered twin Bennetts (both Alex Jennings). This is entirely a theatrical device. One is Life Bennett, fretting behind his curtains, failing to take charge of the situation. The other is

Writer Bennett, his Gollum-y inner-smarty pants supplying barbed witticisms and exploiting this strange predicament for fiction. “You won’t get Harold Pinter pushing anything down a street,” he points out unhelpfully.

We move through the years, the van rusting away, to the unfussy rhythm of the entwined lives of this oddest of couples. More accurately, we follow Bennett’s testy analysis of his own reaction to his squatter’s fierce devotion to prayer, casual racism, explosive defecation, and an elusive past. “She never lets on...” he says, concerned they have more in common than he cares to admit.

There is an aura of caricature about Jennings’ well-honed Bennett (he’s played him on stage and TV), so comforting and English he might have been animated by Nick Park. It’s the caricature in which Bennett armoured himself long ago: the cardie-clad man of letters distributing home truths with

On reflection, it might have been better to live with the scrape.

wistful candour. Is he putting up with the insufferable Miss Shepherd only because he is too timid to object?

Smith, as you would expect, has a ball. It’s a liberating role, unencumbered by social niceties and deafeningly oblivious to kindness. She is shrill and hilarious, but not a joke. Smith is too astute to neglect the brittleness, the lingering sense of loss. Her abandoned life haunts both Bennett’s conscience and his art. Who is she? How did she end up like this? And why does he care so much? The film becomes a quest, of sorts. Bennett, man and writer, wants to restore a life. Whose exactly remains open to question. **IAN NATHAN**

VERDICT *Unshowy to a fault*, Hytner delivers a fine, moving comedy of English manners between a writer and his eccentric tenant, which slowly deepens into an exploration of human bonds.

Hand Gestures

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 20 / CERT. TBC / 77 MINS.

DIRECTOR Francesco Clerici

CAST Velasco Vitali, Andrea Boccone, Nicolae Ciortan

→ Mesmerising and wondrously atmospheric, this is an intimate and deftly observed study of the collaborative nature of creativity and craftsmanship that reveals how methods dating from classical antiquity are still used in a Milanese foundry to create bronze sculptures. **DP**

The Fear Of 13

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 13 / CERT. TBC / 96 MINS.

DIRECTOR David Sington

CAST Nick

→ Centring on a performance monologue to camera by Nick, a convicted murderer who’s been on Death Row for 23 years, this gripping confession recalls his mistakes and misfortunes, as well as the breaks that followed his discovery of the redemptive power of literature and love. **DP**

Unbranded

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 27 / CERT. TBC / 105 MINS.

DIRECTOR Phillip Baribeau **CAST** Jonny Fitzsimons, Thomas Glover, Ben Masters

More *City Slickers* reality stunt than in-depth study of America’s lost frontier, this account of four graduates herding mustangs (the equine type) from New Mexico to Canada has its moments of spectacle and danger, but offers too few genuine insights or rite-of-passage epiphanies. **PP**

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Carol

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 27 / CERT. 15 / 119 MINS.

DIRECTOR Todd Haynes

CAST Cate Blanchett, Rooney Mara, Kyle Chandler, Sarah Paulson

PLOT A chance encounter in a department store leads elegant housewife Carol (Blanchett) and uncertain shopgirl Therese (Mara) into a forbidden romance in 1950s New York.



HE SOUNDS OF a train station over black and then, what's that? A fence? A cage? No, it's a floor grille we open on — elegant and iron and covering who knows what. This is a film about entrapment and escape and finding out what is underneath the veneer — of society, our ourselves.

From *Strangers On A Train* to the various talented Ripleys, Patricia Highsmith's novels and short stories have proved fertile fiction for big-screen skulduggery for 65 years, but this is the

first film adaptation of her second novel, *The Price Of Salt*, and atypical in that the deaths are more of desire than physical. There is danger and violence here, but the emotional blows land heaviest. The film is measured and restrained and as muted as its autumnal colour palette but the little moments — the silences, the looks, the longing — build and build, to power a freight train of feeling.

Highsmith's story of a romance between two women was published under a pseudonym in 1952, so as to avoid scandal sticking to her. What was daring then should not now raise so many eyebrows, although Phyllis Nagy's screenplay deftly shows how convention can trap us all — regardless of gender or status or sexual orientation. As much as the film is about a story billed at the time as "a love society forbids", it is also about simple separation and divorce — that loneliness and confusion. It would have been very easy for the makers to present Carol's husband Harge (the wonderful Kyle Chandler) as a villain, but we see that his actions come from confusion and desperation, rather than hatred. The film has some of its most poignant moments not in its central love but Carol dealing with her infant child — explaining, in a beautiful, sorrowful line, why she can't be with her: "Sometimes mommies

Carol (Cate Blanchett) finds herself wrapped up in her feelings for another woman.

and daddies just decide there isn't enough room for them in the same place at the same time."

Todd Haynes' last big-screen story of '50s forbidden love was Douglas Sirk-tribute *Far From Heaven*, but the lack of irony or detachment here elevates *Carol*. Aside from a rather too knowing moment when a character, watching a film, talks of the difference between what people say and what they really feel, this is a straight, sincere picture (aided endlessly by Carter Burwell's sumptuous score). The decision to film on Super 16mm makes it, cleverly, feel both from another era and yet immediate. Characters are often eclipsed by edges — of doors, chairs, people — and beats pass where we can only imagine or anticipate how our lovers must be feeling. Blanchett is brilliant — she so often is it is easy to take it for granted — but Mara has the longer distance to travel, from confused girl to grown woman, and her versatility and sensitivity is simply stunning. She is very Other — "my angel, flung out of space". But she is also Us. **NEV PIERCE**

VERDICT Mara and Blanchett make for an unforgettable couple in a beautiful film about longing, loss and the confusion and wonder of love.

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Bridge Of Spies

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 27 / CERT. 12A / 141 MINS.

DIRECTOR Steven Spielberg

CAST Tom Hanks, Mark Rylance, Amy Ryan, Austin Stowell

PLOT In 1957, with the Cold War in full swing, artist Rudolf Abel (Rylance) is arrested on spying charges. Keen to show due process, the American government lines up James Donovan (Hanks) to defend him. Later, when U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers (Stowell) crash-lands in Soviet Russia, Donovan and Abel become key to his release.



Under Milk Wood

★★★

OUT OCTOBER 30 / CERT. 15 / 87 MINS.

DIRECTOR Kevin Allen **CAST** Rhys Ifans, Charlotte Church, Gareth Edwards

→ This adaptation of Dylan Thomas' 'play for voices' — the first since 1972 — is less brooding, more bawdy. Set over a day and night in the fictional village of Llareggub (read it backwards), Rhys Ifans narrates the kaleidoscopically erotic and occasionally melancholy dreams of blind sailor Captain Cat and his fellow villagers — flitting from dead lovers to religion to sex. Llareggub itself is a boggy, soggy dreamscape, scattered with '50s nostalgia and an impressive roll-call of comic inhabitants who get moments to twinkle — especially when bursting into musical numbers in the manner of a rambunctious Greek chorus. It's filthy, bonkers fun. **KP**

Love

★★

OUT NOVEMBER 20 / CERT. 18 / 135 MINS.

DIRECTOR Gaspar Noé **CAST** Karl Glusman, Aomi Muyock, Klara Kristin

→ After the pulsing, psychedelic life-after-death story *Enter The Void*, Gaspar Noé's first film in 3D promised even trippier mischief. Instead, *Love*, only the Paris-based provocateur's fourth film in 17 years, is really quite mellow. If it wasn't for the hardcore sex, which, ahem, climaxes in a gushing male orgasm that sprays over the audience's head, this could be a standard rites-of-passage story, in which film student Murphy (Glusman) looks back at a previous relationship after accidentally becoming a parent. The acting is wooden, but fans of the director's more shocking work might enjoy its gentle self-referential comedy. **DW**



DID YOU KNOW?

The correct pronunciation of Amanda Seyfried's surname is "Sigh-frid". She is German, English and Scots-Irish extraction.



Fathers And Daughters

★

OUT NOVEMBER 13 / CERT. TBC / 116 MINS.

DIRECTOR Gabriele Muccino **CAST** Russell Crowe, Amanda Seyfried, Aaron Paul

→ Gabriele Muccino's muddled, overwrought soapy drama works on two intermingling timelines. The first follows widowed author Jake (Crowe) suffering a mental breakdown while wrestling over custody of his infant daughter, Katie. The second follows a grown-up Katie (Seyfried) sleeping around to mask her pain until she meets nice Cameron (Paul). It's tastefully shot and Crowe commits to the horrors of Jake's illness (his seizures are upsetting) but the writing lacks depth, the character psychology is dime-store Freud and the performances are variable: Diane Kruger, as Jake's 'evil' sister-in-law, may give the pantomime performance of the year. **IF**



American lawyer
James Donovan
(Tom Hanks) steps
out into the Cold War.



INSURANCE LAWYER James Donovan, who unexpectedly became a big hat in the Cold War, could best be described as the Tom Hanks type. You know, the stalwart American: smart, decent, morally courageous, a brilliant man who plays the fool, with a smile for every kind of weather. When stirred, and this absorbing account of his exploits does plenty of stirring, that smile turns to steel. He is Atticus Finch attempting George Smiley, a straight shooter stalking a land of riddles. Sensibly, then, Steven Spielberg has cast Tom Hanks to play him.

The pleasingly unpredictable latter-career Spielberg has chosen to follow his magnificent rumination on the greatness of Lincoln with another category-resistant historical reenactment. Genre-wise, *Bridge Of Spies* (a reference to the Glienicke Bridge, where spy-swaps are made in shivering pre-dawn Berlin) dances between courtroom drama and espionage thriller. There is plenty of speechifying too, stirring gusts of high-minded virtue: "American justice will be on trial!" It's a meaty gumbo of Capra, Le Carré and Perry Mason. From *Minority Report* to *Lincoln*, another of

Spielberg's enquiries into the nature of American goodness as ordained by the Constitution.

Donovan's particular corridor of history is not a natural fit for a movie. A HBO mini-series might have served its complexities better, but Spielberg, a film-man to his bones, keeps the mood deliberately old-fashioned. The look is polished and dreamlike, as if it came from the '50s. See how the sun glints off New York cabs, and Berlin comes smeared in the statutory layer of dirty snow.

The first, shapelier half depicts Donovan's attempts to bring "the rule of law" to his futile defence of Abel. In one of numerous ironies, it's as much a show trial as anything the Soviets can throw. Donovan's insistence on American values has him attacked as unpatriotic, but he is canny enough to foresee that Abel could be insurance against America's own spying follies. Like a Jimmy Stewart or Gary Cooper, both embodiments of '50s integrity, Hanks' star persona is the engine that drives the film forward.

As the wiry, subdued Abel, Mark Rylance works the opposite trick. He is a chameleon, summoning sympathy for this strange, unprepossessing figure, as much a man of principle as his lawyer. Despite having witnessed his chicanery

in a terrifically sustained arrest sequence, we root for Donovan to clear him.

The second half of Donovan's journey is less fluent (history can be a lousy screenwriter) but no less interesting. Bridged by Gary Powers' U-2 spy plane going down in a hail of bright CGI, the film leaps to 1962. Donovan 'unofficially' crisscrosses the newly raised Berlin Wall, tensely negotiating the exchange of Powers for Abel with a gaggle of meddlesome agents and grumpy apparatchiks. Matching the grim, divided city, the tone becomes bleak and darkly comic.

Which brings us to those pesky Coen boys. Notably, Spielberg enrolled them to pep-up Matt Charman's script. Without spoiling the mood, you detect their quirky voice everywhere, probing the realpolitik for absurdity, finding comedy in the madness of nuclear brinkmanship, and writing great scenes of Donovan tormenting CIA wonk and KGB clown alike. He's nobility personified, and a bit of a windbag. **IAN NATHAN**

VERDICT So godlike is Spielberg's status that we often take his talents for granted. The strange, riveting mix of *Bridge Of Spies* is another sterling reminder that we shouldn't.



Mr Calzaghe

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 20 / CERT. 15 / 90 MINS.

DIRECTOR Vaughan Sivell

CAST Joe Calzaghe, Enzo Calzaghe, Chris Eubank, Michael J. Fox

→ Professing punchdrunk love for its subject, Vaughan Sivell's involving if sentimental bio-doc pays tribute to the indestructible Joe Calzaghe — 46 wins, 32 knock-outs, zero defeats. With stats as heroic as that, you wonder where the drama lies, but Sivell explores a fascinating dynamic: the seemingly incompatible bond between the Italian Dragon and his trainer-father Enzo, a former bass player whose musicality was absorbed into Calzaghe Jr.'s fighting style. The fight footage is belting, but it's the unique, deep father-son connection that really makes the heart pound. **SC**

DID YOU KNOW?
A surprise talking head in the boxing documentary is Marty McFly himself, Michael J. Fox. Fox is a big fight fan and clearly knows his stuff.



Momentum

★

OUT NOVEMBER 20 / CERT. 15 / 94 MINS.

DIRECTOR Stephen S. Campanelli

CAST Olga Kurylenko, James Purefoy, Morgan Freeman

→ A G. I. Joe-inspired bank robbery, murder by JCB digger toy, the line, "I hate you and I hate this bed, which was probably made in China!" Looking at some of its ingredients, *Momentum* should be a dark action-comedy; it is not. Po-faced and preposterous, this cheapie South African crime thriller has a first-draft script and first-take acting, with its three leads — Kurylenko, Purefoy, Freeman — all capable of much better. If it were edited as a spoof of schlock on sale at Asda till points, it could work as a bargain-basement *Crank*. As it stands, it's one of the worst films you won't see in 2015. **AP**



My Nazi Legacy

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 20 / CERT. PG / 94 MINS.

DIRECTOR David Evans **CAST** Philippe Sands, Niklas Frank, Horst von Wächter

→ This vital documentary starts slowly, as human rights lawyer Philippe Sands meets two elderly men who recall their contrasting childhoods: one happy, the other miserable. The link? Their fathers were high ranking Nazis. Family photos are shared, reminiscences dwelt on, then Sands takes them to the sites of World War II atrocities, and Niklas Frank damns his dad while Horst von Wächter defends his. Their friendship is tested and their contrasting attitudes shed stark light on how these terrible events came to pass. Sands has his own personal link to the Holocaust, revealed over time, and *My Nazi Legacy* becomes horribly gripping. **NP**

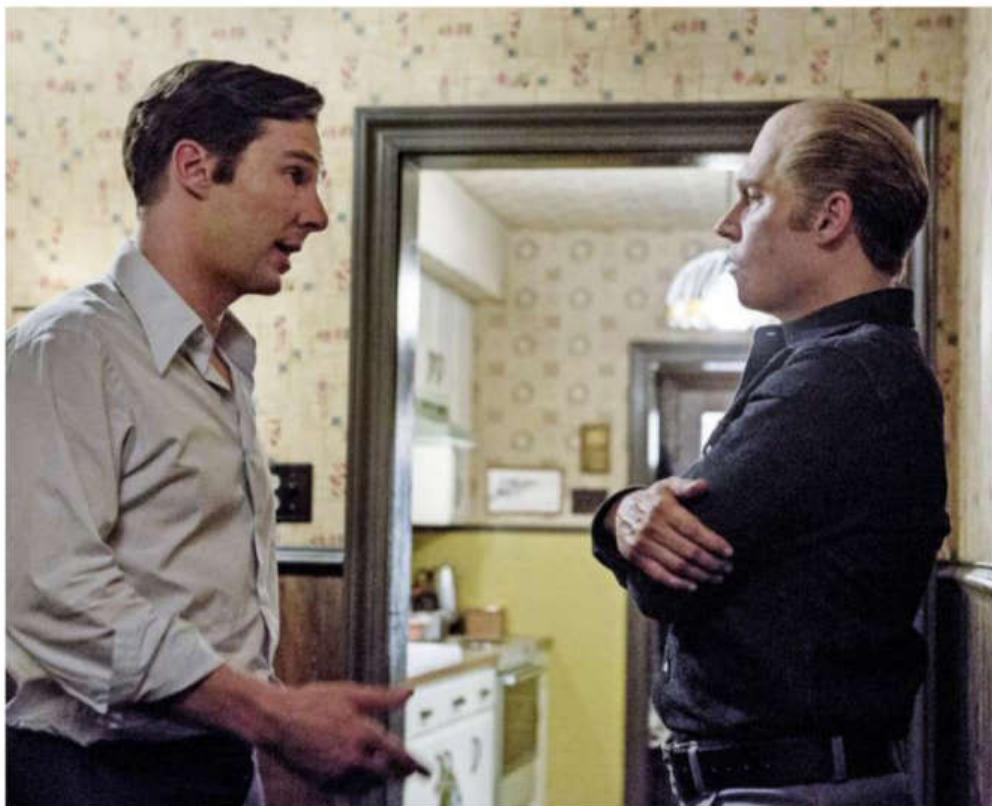
Black Mass

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 27 / CERT. 15 / 123 MINS.

DIRECTOR Scott Cooper
CAST Johnny Depp, Joel Edgerton, Benedict Cumberbatch, David Harbour, Dakota Johnson, Peter Sarsgaard, Kevin Bacon, Adam Scott

PLOT When FBI agent John Connolly (Edgerton) brings Boston gangster Whitey Bulger (Depp) on board as a top-level informant, the line between cop and criminal begins to blur.



GROUP OF gangsters drive out to a remote location. One of them is a motormouth, so focused on firing his gob off that he can't see what's about to come: a bullet to the brain. Stop us if you've seen this one before, in *GoodFellas*, sundry *Godfathers* and a thousand other Mafia movies that don't begin with 'G'. Thankfully, this is as clichéd as Scott Cooper's *Black Mass* gets.

That might be because it's based on a story that, however improbable, is true. Whitey Bulger was a notorious Boston gangster, with a crusading senator for a brother. He did get into bed with the FBI. He did use their influence to help clear his path to the top.

It might also be because Cooper assiduously avoids a Scorsese/Coppola impression, ditching showy camerawork in favour of establishing a tone that starts ditch-dark and becomes increasingly

corrosive and oppressive. And it might be because it's not just a gangster flick.

The crucial decision here, by Cooper and his writers Mark Mallouk and British playwright Jez Butterworth, is to split the focus equally between Bulger (Johnny Depp) and his FBI handler Connolly (Joel Edgerton), a childhood friend of Bulger's whose strange loyalty to, and almost hero worship of Bulger leads to his downfall. As Connolly slowly succumbs to corruption, Edgerton — skyscraper of hair jutting above his perpetually furrowed brow — is excellent. He's the standout in a superb ensemble cast (Peter Sarsgaard, Benedict Cumberbatch, Kevin Bacon), and more than holds his own opposite the star attraction, Depp.

Depp, of course, has had a rough couple of years. If Australia isn't threatening to shoot his dogs one minute, then he's making terrible movies the next. Seemingly lost in a sea of gurning caricatures, it feels like it's been an age since we saw Depp deliver. He does here,

Blood brothers:
 state Senator Billy Bulger (Benedict Cumberbatch) with his violent gangster sibling Whitey (Johnny Depp).

but with caveats. There's no question that the black mass of the title refers to Bulger, a human cancer slowly destroying everything and everyone around him. There's also a satanic aura about him, reinforced by Depp's commitment to looking like the real-life Whitey. The rotting teeth, scaly skin, chalk-white hair and blazing blue eyes are a million miles away from mugging with a moustache, but his otherworldly look may be counter-productive. As powerful as the performance is, it's ultimately damaged when you're constantly reminded that that's just what it is: a *performance*. Still, he hasn't been this intense or vital in years. Welcome back, Johnny. **CHRIS HEWITT**

VERDICT Compelling and powerfully acted, with just enough wrinkles to avoid the ghosts of gangster movies past. Depp's appearance might distract some, but it's good to see him back in the groove.

Tell Spring Not To Come This Year

★★

OUT NOVEMBER 13 / CERT. TBC / 87 MINS.
DIRECTORS Saeed Taji Farouky, Michael McEvoy **CAST** Captain Jalaluddin, Private Sunnatullah

→ Embedded with an Afghan National Army unit in Helmand, the co-directors put themselves at huge risk to capture the terrifying reality of fighting an enemy like the Taliban. The camaraderie and courage on display is humblingly affecting. **DP**

Star*Men

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 20 / CERT. PG / 88 MINS.
DIRECTOR Alison Rose
CAST Donald Lynden-Bell, Roger Griffin, Wal Sargent, Nick Woolf

→ Resembling a real-life *The Big Bang Theory* reunion, this is a charming profile of four British astronomers on an American road trip, who retain a poignant curiosity, humility and awe despite making significant contributions to their field over five game-changing decades. **DP**

Black Souls

★★★

OUT OCTOBER 30 / CERT. 15 / 109 MINS.
DIRECTOR Francesco Munzi
CAST Marco Leonardi, Peppino Mazzotta, Fabrizio Ferracane, Barbora Bobulova

→ A clan feud and sibling rivalries simmer in this thoughtful but intense adaptation of Gioacchino Criaco's fact-based novel about crime syndicate the 'Ndrangheta that draws contrasts between its chic Milanese interiors and the rugged beauty of the Calabrian countryside. **DP**

ALSO OUT

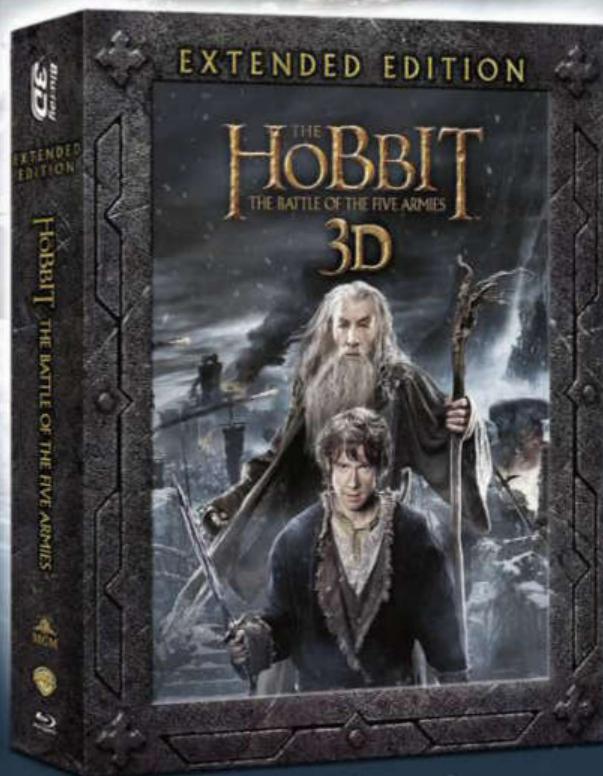
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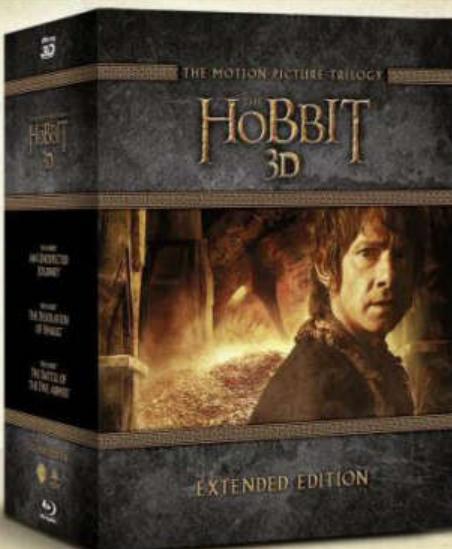
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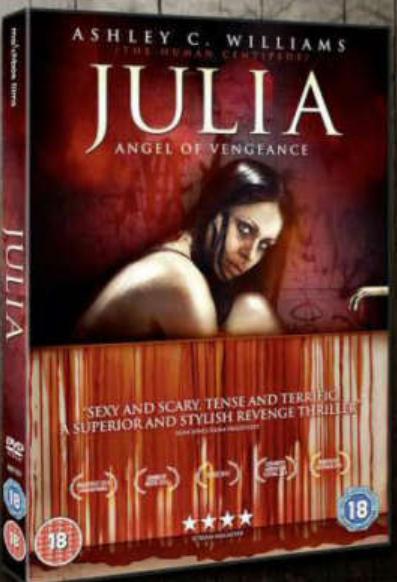
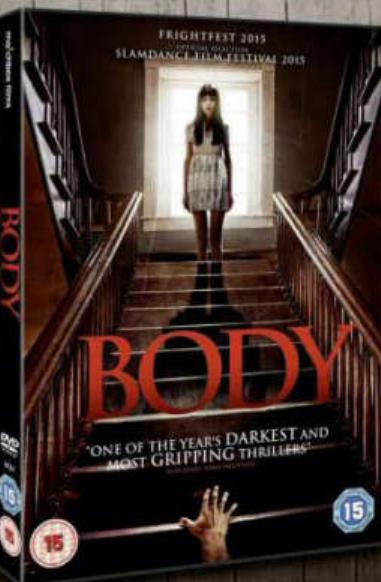
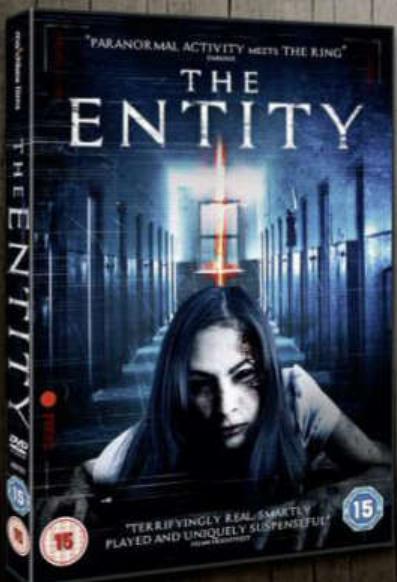
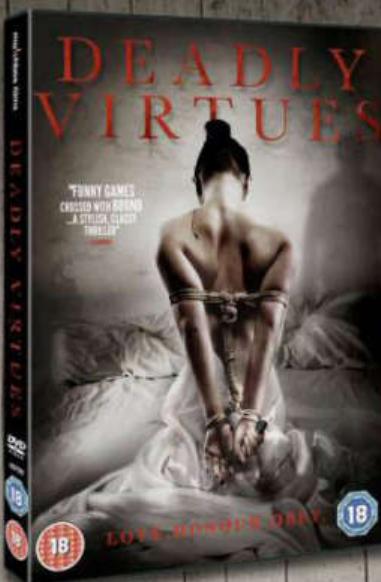
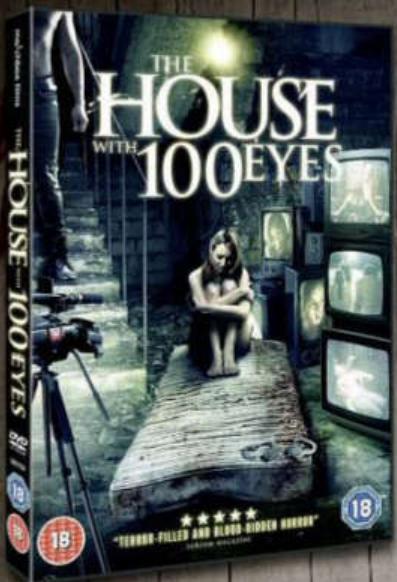
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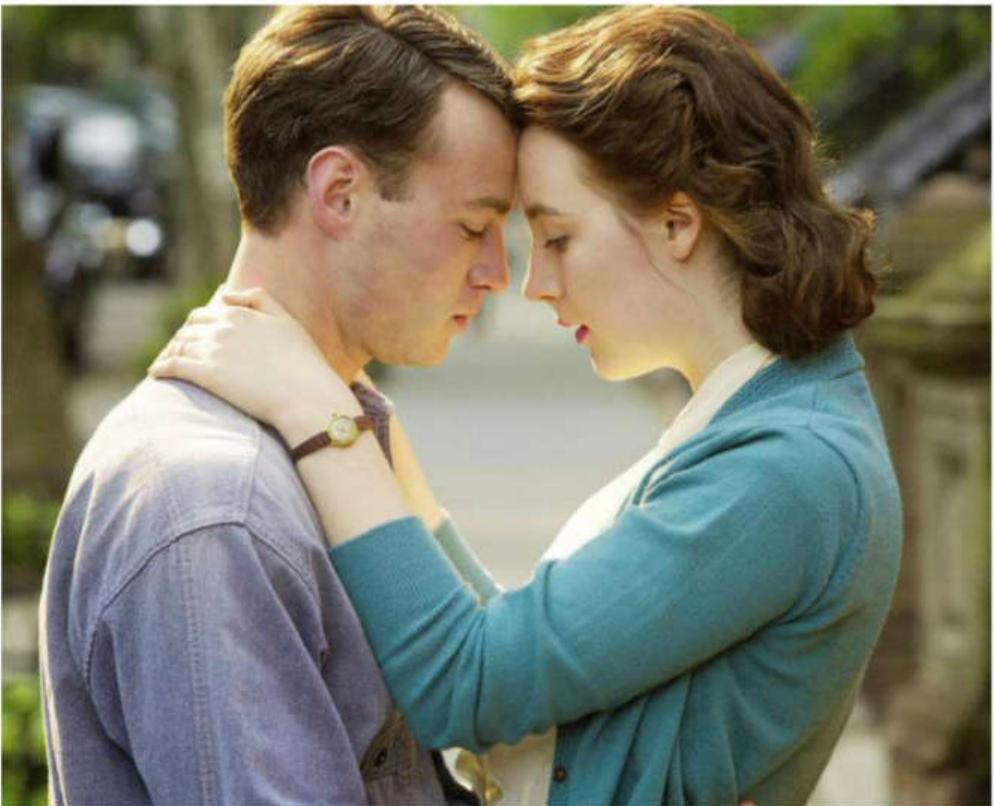


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IN CINEMAS

Brooklyn

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 6 / CERT. 12A / 112 MINS.

DIRECTOR John Crowley

CAST Saoirse Ronan, Domhnall Gleeson, Emory Cohen

PLOT Eilis Lacey (Ronan) fearfully leaves Ireland for a new life in 1950s New York, where she is entrusted to a protective priest (Jim Broadbent) and upright landlady (Julie Walters) while she finds her feet. But she will soon find herself torn between two worlds.



T'S RARE TO SEE any immigrant experience through a young woman's perceptions, and it's undeniably charming to see the

preternaturally poised Saoirse Ronan, in a performance both polished and feeling, as a timid girl thrown into the brash new world of post-War America. While sad to leave her family behind, her mother and selfless sister insist she escape her dismal prospects in County Wexford. The poignant farewell at the dock is a scene that would have taken place many thousands of times.

Although kindly Father Flood (Jim Broadbent) has placed Eilis in the boarding house of strict but hilarious Ma Kehoe (Julie Walters) and with a job in a smart department store, she's soon overwhelmed by the big city and homesick for Ireland. It's only after she meets Italian-American Tony (Emory Cohen),

They'd need to get over this fear of Craig Revel Horwood.

who is crazy about her, that her wardrobe improves strikingly, her tastes broaden, the American Dream beckons... Until, that is, sudden tragedy requires she return home, where all things conspire to keep her there, not least the previously unattainable perfect match, Jim (Domhnall Gleeson), presenting a safe alternative future.

Nick Hornby's adaptation of Colm Tóibín's classic leaving-home story focuses sensitively on Eilis' vulnerability and conflict. For a guy who made his name nailing the modern male, Hornby is on a roll dramatising women well, in *An Education*, *Wild* and here. Director John Crowley, too, is not someone you immediately associate with more heartfelt material, having set out his stall with *Boy A* and most recently episodes of *True Detective*. He seems to have revelled in making this as gorgeous and emotive as possible, and it's a real treat, as is the cast. Cohen was either cast because he looks like Marlon Brando in *On The Waterfront* or he has made a study of it; he's one lovable, lost-for-words plumber.

It's fortunate Ronan is so movingly mixed up dithering between two countries and two men, because Eilis is for a time infuriatingly passive. Her inability to say what should be said makes you want to scream. But that is painfully believable, and not just in 1952. **ANGIE ERRIGO**

VERDICT Unashamedly romantic and achieved with a beautifully subtle, old-fashioned elegance, it's a graceful coming-of-age tale ripe for awards.

The Closer We Get

★★

OUT NOVEMBER 6 / CERT. PG / 91 MINS.

DIRECTOR Karen Guthrie **CAST** Karen Guthrie, Ann Guthrie, Ian Guthrie

→ There's something disconcerting about documentarists seeking catharsis by letting skeletons out of the closet. Karen Guthrie's study of her furtive father and a stroke-paralysed mother feels additionally resistible as it has been so archly constructed to wring the maximum melodrama from a sad situation. **DP**

Do I Sound Gay?

★★★

OUT OCTOBER 30 / CERT. 15 / 77 MINS.

DIRECTOR David Thorpe **CAST** David Thorpe, Dan Savage, George Takei, Margaret Cho

→ Big issues get raised but glossed over in this witty exploration of the (self-) reinforcement of gay stereotypes. The old movie clips are fantastic. But, while the musings on persona as performance intrigue, the insights into media homophobia lack force. **DP**

Warriors

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 13 / CERT. TBC / 86 MINS.

DIRECTOR Barney Douglas **CAST** Sonyanga Ole Ngais, Jonathan Nissan Meshami

→ Hugely engaging and quietly potent account of how the Maasai Cricket Warriors from the Kenyan bush sufficiently develop their sporting skills to play at Lord's and use their new socio-cultural perspectives to reform traditional attitudes towards women. **DP**

ALSO OUT



The Hallow

★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 13 / CERT. 15 / 97 MINS.

DIRECTOR Corin Hardy
CAST Joseph Mawle, Bojana Novakovic, Michael Smiley

PLOT Ireland. Adam Hitchens (Joseph Mawle) and his family move to a dense forest, where they are targeted by the Hallow — malign fairies who intend to switch his baby with a changeling.

BRITISH WRITER-director Corin Hardy's debut feature riffs heavily on video nasty-era horror films like *The Evil Dead* (a thumpingly sinister book of black magic) and *The House By The Cemetery* (as in many Lucio Fulci films, eyes are especially threatened). However, it has an earthy, forest-y Irish setting which taps into local folklore — as delivered by a welcome Michael Smiley as an exposition-spouting local copper — and hints at contemporary social context as we learn the fairies' ancient forest has been bought by an exploitative corporation, perhaps prompting nasty reprisals.

After an ominous introductory section, replete with unfriendly locals whose warnings go unheeded and incomers who do foolish things like take down the protective window-bars,

The Hallow goes into overdrive and delivers an effective succession of shocks. A glowering Joseph Mawle suffers a supernatural fungus infestation and begins to change into a spiky woodland creature, while crawling, spindle-limbed beasties besiege his isolated cottage with destructive intent. There's also a nasty take on the old changeling folk tale as the hysterical parents clash over whether the baby in the crib is theirs or a baleful, inhuman replacement.

Bojana Novakovic gets the Shelley Duvall-in-*The-Shining* gig of fending off both a mad, transformed husband and an assault of supernatural phenomena, but isn't quite given enough to do to ground the horrors in domestic concerns. The use of Irish lore makes for a change of pace in what is still basically a cabin-in-the-woods picture, though the hallow themselves owe more to recent fright-flick fiends like the crawlers of *The Descent* or the feral vampires of *Stakeland* than authentic Celtic myth. Still, they are effectively used for jump scares and let's not forget how Oirish horror took a detour to find a pot o' shite at the end of the rainbow in the *Leprechaun* franchise.

It's not difficult to see where things are going, but *The Hallow* does its job well enough to get by. No new ground is broken, but the point of folklore is to tell the old tales again. **KIM NEWMAN**

VERDICT A solidly effective little horror film, but too reliant on quotes from the genre's past hits to establish its own distinctive identity.

Say Hallow, wave goodbye: Joseph Mawle faces his fears.



Steve McQueen: The Man & Le Mans

★★

OUT NOVEMBER 20 / CERT. 15 / 102 MINS.

DIRECTORS Gabriel Clarke, John McKenna
CAST Steve McQueen, Neile Adams, Chad McQueen

→ One comes out of this fragmentary documentary about the King Of Cool's passion for motor racing liking him much less than one did going in. The chronicle of professional betrayals and ugly personal behaviour (screwing tootsies under his wife and children's noses, making his PA take the blame for his drunken car crash) leaves a sour taste. Contemporary interviews weave through a trove of behind-the-scenes material but the facts, like the strong suggestion McQueen's cancer was caused by asbestos in '60s racing suits, are skewed to suit. **AE**



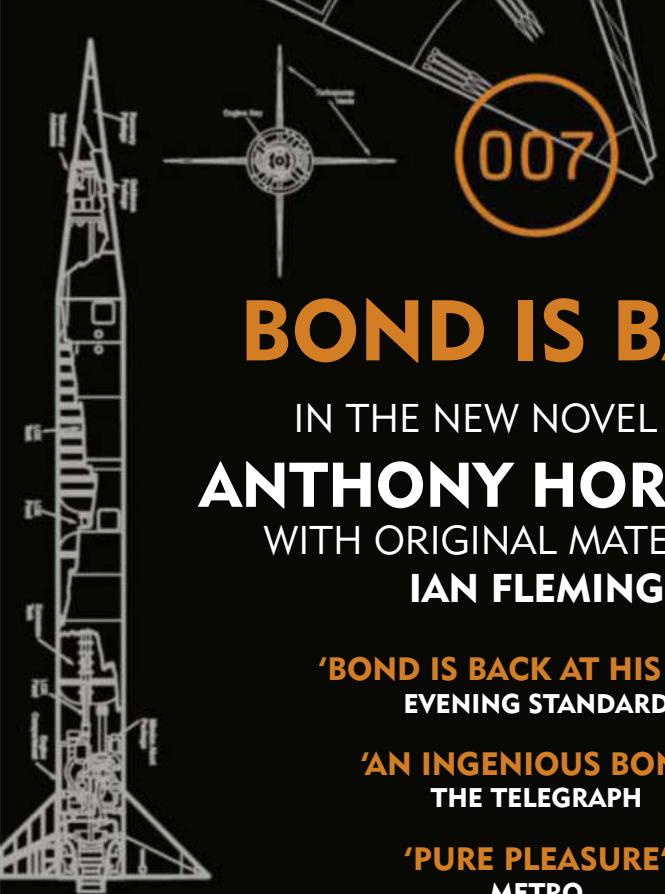
He Named Me Malala

★★★★

OUT NOVEMBER 6 / CERT. PG / 87 MINS.

DIRECTOR Davis Guggenheim
CAST Malala Yousafzai, Ziauddin Yousafzai

→ Davis 'An Inconvenient Truth' Guggenheim's latest documentary gets up close with teenage Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai, who, on October 9, 2012, was shot in the head by a Taliban gunman in response to her calls for girls to once more be able to attend school. Almost two years later she became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, having brought her campaign to a global audience. Bolstered by gorgeous pastel-drawn animations, Guggenheim's film is a testament to her amazing tenacity, while also a touching portrait of a father/daughter relationship. Shocking, inspiring and uplifting. **DJ**



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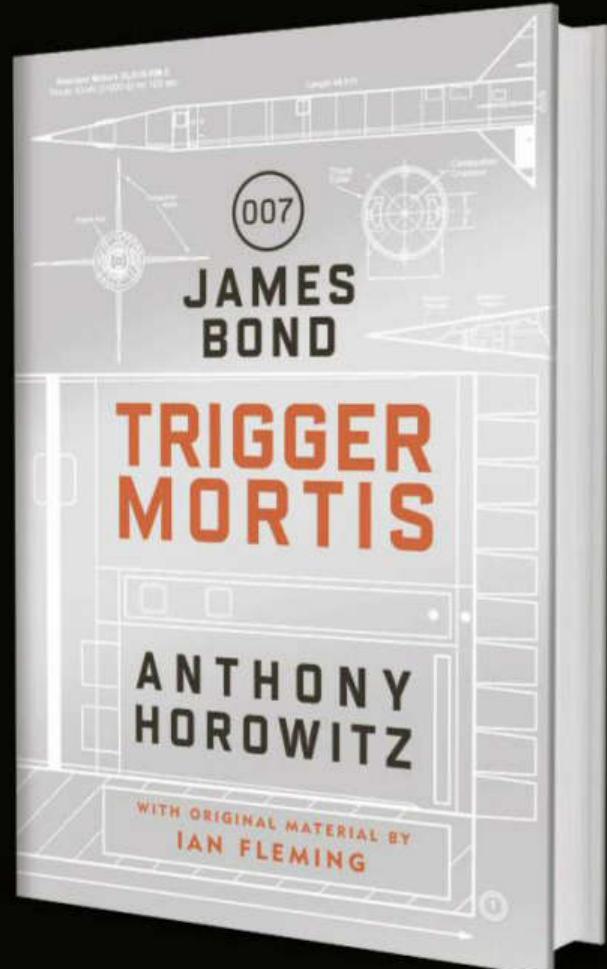
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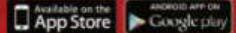
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Crimson Peak

★★★

OUT NOW / CERT. 15 / 119 MINS.

DIRECTOR Guillermo del Toro **CAST** Mia Wasikowska, Jessica Chastain, Tom Hiddleston, Charlie Hunnam

PLOT American wannabe-novelist Edith Cushing (Wasikowska) is swept off her feet by dashing British baronet Sir Thomas Sharpe (Hiddleston). But his decrepit estate comes with his brittle sister Lucille (Chastain). And ghosts. And other dark threats...



P UNTIL NOW, YOU could easily scratch a thick, red line through the middle of Guillermo del Toro's work. On one side you'd have his 'grown-up' movies, on the other his North American pictures. *Crimson Peak* is, finally, his first film to cross that line. It is wrought from the same baroque, shadowy materials as *The Devil's Backbone* and *Pan's Labyrinth*, yet nobody's speaking Spanish. It's as if someone's finally decided that us English-babblers can handle del Toro without a kid-friendly certificate and giant, building-mashing monsters.

The result is, for the most part, a gory, glorious and visually sumptuous success. *Crimson Peak* is closest to *The Devil's Backbone*, another period ghost-story with an innocent protagonist, inventively rendered spectre (or, in this case, spectres) and a mystery at its heart rather than an urge to terrify. But where that concerned a Spanish Civil War-era orphanage, this mostly plays out in a vast, rotting gothic mansion on a blasted Northern-English moor in the late 19th century. And del Toro revels in his extreme setting, making *Crimson Peak*

a fever-pitched, candelabra-lit romance whose supernatural elements are shamelessly lurid.

The house itself, for example, *bleeds*. With the Sharpes' creepy domicile subsiding atop a red clay mine, the stuff oozes through the floorboards – thick, gloopy and bright orange-scarlet. It very much resembles Hammer-horror blood, sticky stage-claret from the days when it was felt that the real thing just didn't look impressive enough on screen. And del Toro's ghosts are made from the same stuff: bright red, distorted-skull-faced women, twitching and wailing at us from the afterlife.

Beyond his impressive array of hauntrresses, there's no attempt to redefine a genre here, or even subject it to fiendish new twists. This is a Victorian Gothic pastiche by a filmmaker who knows his stuff, and as long as you don't expect to be surprised by its plot developments or subjected to a full-on horror, there is much to enjoy. In portraying the kind of characters you'd expect to populate such a dark-cornered tale, Mia Wasikowska and Tom Hiddleston play entertainingly to their strengths (she's the wan ingénue with a steely core; he's the dastard with a flicker of conscience), while Jessica Chastain shows off a side we've not seen before: vicious and dangerously fragile.

The placement of his latest film right on top of that scratched, red line is appropriate in more ways than one. *Pan's Labyrinth* and *The Devil's Backbone* are significantly superior works to the likes of *Hellboy* and *Pacific Rim*. And while *Crimson Peak* isn't quite as strong as those previous grown-up offerings, it is arguably his finest North American picture yet. **DAN JOLIN**

VERDICT It may be a little overwrought for some tastes, borderline camp at points, but if you're partial to a bit of Victorian romance with Hammer horror gloop and big, frilly night-gowns, GDT delivers an uncommon treat.



The Walk

★★★

OUT NOW / CERT. PG / 123 MINS.

DIRECTOR Robert Zemeckis
CAST Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Ben Kingsley, Charlotte Le Bon

PLOT The true story of Philippe Petit (Gordon-Levitt), a French tightrope walker who decided to walk the gap between the Twin Towers, simply because they were there.

OBERT ZEMECKIS' telling of the high-wire derring-do of Philippe Petit exhausts itself for a long time trying to answer a niggling question: why does

it exist when we have the Oscar-winning, widely seen documentary *Man On Wire*, which already thrillingly told of Petit's absurd plan to illegally tightrope-walk between New York's Twin Towers? It finds its answer eventually, and it's a pretty convincing one, but there's an awful lot of wobble beforehand.

There is a foundational problem with telling Petit's story. He's a bit of a prick. A lot of one, actually. Even when he's an anonymous street performer, he considers himself superior to everyone. He shouts. He bullies people into helping him. He's a pain in the bum. Boorishness is somehow easier to watch in a documentary, because

you're investing in the facts of a story rather than any one person in it. In scripted drama, with which we're conditioned to empathise, an annoying central character is a problem. Joseph Gordon-Levitt can't be criticised for his energy in the role, even if his manner, like any non-Frenchman playing French, comes off a touch Pepé Le Pew. There's always part of you that hopes his rope might give out.

Whether to differentiate his film from the documentary or to echo Petit's wildness, Zemeckis throws a lot of stylistic gimmicks at the story. The fourth wall is broken immediately and almost every plot point is told in voice-over. It works against him, Petit's narration giving a cartoonish feel and the narrated exposition offering characters no opportunity to establish themselves independently. The supporting cast is so thinly drawn they can all be boiled down to a single noun — the girlfriend, the stoner, the photographer.

And then we get to that walk. It is majestic. There are few directors who know better than Zemeckis where to put a camera for maximum awe. It offers one thing *Man On Wire* couldn't, the feeling of being out there. For that stretch, the movie has every reason to exist and it dazzles. Partly because Petit shuts up for a bit. **OLLY RICHARDS**

VERDICT It's extremely antic for the most part, covering a lack of real story with a lot of distracting quirk. Yet when Petit's foot slips out onto a wire thousands of metres from the ground, it's quietly mesmerising.

Man in black: Joseph Gordon-Levitt's Philippe finds himself at a crossroads.

AT A GLANCE



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FIRST LOOK

APOCALYPSE WOW. .O.

Empire hits the furious frontlines of *Warcraft*: not just a video-game adaptation, but a movie that breaks new ground in the fantasy genre

WORDS DAN JOLIN

IN THE WORLD OF *WARCRAFT*, battle rages. On the human side: Travis Fimmel as Anduin Lothar, The Lion Of Azeroth. He's encased in bulky, ornate plate armour. Huge pauldrons arch over his shoulders, and he's in the kind of boots you'd expect to see on an ancient diver. Fimmel's a big guy, but you still wonder how he moves so fluidly in such chunky footwear.

On the orc side: three of the tallest stuntmen you've ever seen, none of

them under six foot. And none of them looking remotely orcish. Decked in the standard mo-cap uniform of grey PJs, ping-pong-ball markers and face-cams, they are mere skeletons for the tusked, 800lb-of-muscle monsters that are being digitally sculpted around them via a live feed to a nearby VFX 'Brain Bar'. Still, they walk like they've twice the girth, and convincingly wield foam-padded pole-frame representations of warhammers in wide, sweeping gestures. >

Their “playspace” is a soundstage at Canadian Motion Picture Park in Vancouver so big it could swallow 12 tennis courts. This week it’s been filled with slate-black outcrops and scree-scattered escarpments, all set against a 360-degree blue-screen horizon and dotted with dozens of reference cameras that make it one of the largest-ever mo-cap volumes.

Strobe lights bathe the scene in lightning flashes and someone yells, “Rolling!” Fimmel hits the central orc with his pommel, then weaves around his body as the other two close in. One blow with his big, gleaming sword takes out the orc to his left, then he strikes the central guy again, keeping him dazed while dispatching the brute to his right. Before delivering his killer blow to the last orc standing, he pauses for a beat and throws him an ‘I told you so’ look. Then, all his enemies vanquished, he flashes the kind of winning grin that will be very familiar to fans of his work in the History channel’s *Vikings*.

“I just wanted to make him feel a bit bad before he got the big sword in his head,” the Aussie says after striding over to *Empire* a few moments later. Lothar, he explains, is the commander of the army on human homeworld Azeroth, champion to heroic king Llane Wrynn (Dominic Cooper). “Lothar’s spent his whole life trying to do what’s right for his people. Keeping the peace. And there’s been peace for a long time in Azeroth. Then the orcs come and invade his world. So,” Fimmel adds, almost ruefully, “the movie’s not very peaceful.”

IN *WORLD OF WARCRAFT*, battle has already been raging for 11 years. This massively multiplayer online role-playing game is one of the biggest successes in video-game history, earning its developer Blizzard, Entertainment, over a billion dollars per year from its six-million-odd subscribers. Given such a huge and avid fanbase, it’s surprising it’s taken so long for the movie adaptation to kick off.

“It has been a long-gestating thing,” admits executive producer Jillian Share of Legendary Pictures (the outfit behind *300*, *Pacific Rim* and the *Dark Knight* trilogy). “Jon Jashni, the president of Legendary, had the rights years before he was even at Legendary, which was eight or nine years ago. But we felt we needed to be sure we were telling the right story. We went through several iterations, and had several directors come and go.”

Sam Raimi came very close, though in the end couldn’t square his vision with



Top: Toby Kebbell as beleaguered orc clan chief, Durotan.

Above: Travis Fimmel’s Anduin Lothar amid the fog of war(craft).

Blizzard’s desire to service its fanbase, and decided to move on to *Oz The Great And Powerful*. Which opened the way for a pair of filmmakers who themselves were already part of that fanbase.

“Duncan used to play as a Horde warrior,” explains producer Stuart Fenegan, who has worked closely with director Duncan Jones since his hugely impressive 2009 debut, *Moon*. “I got my human paladin up to level 60 and was raiding Molten Core twice a week with my guild...” The pair had originally pitched Legendary when Raimi was still on board, then came knocking again once they’d wrapped their second movie, *Source Code*, two years later.

Share and Legendary were impressed by Jones’ proposed change to the existing script, by Charles Leavitt (*In The Heart Of The Sea*), one which promised to mark it out from other swords and sorcery pictures.

“When I came on board,” says Jones between bouts of strobe-washed battle, “the script was still very much human-centric, and was much more about humans being goodies and orcs as baddies.” As a committed Horde player (the Horde being the faction in the game led by the orcs), this just wouldn’t do. “My thinking was that this has to be about two equally important stories from either side of the conflict.”

SIR NOT-APPEARING-IN-THIS FILM

SEVEN WORLD OF WARCRAFT OCCURRENCES THAT YOU'RE HIGHLY UNLIKELY TO SEE IN WARCRAFT THE MOVIE

1 AN ORC DANCING LIKE MC HAMMER

Each race and gender has its own dance 'emote' animation. The male orcs do *U Can't Touch This*. Male blood elves, meanwhile, bust some mean *Napoleon Dynamite* moves.

2 AN OBVIOUS MOVIE REFERENCE

Azeroth is littered with them: there's a 'Colonel Kurzen' in the jungles of Stranglethorn Vale, Stormwind mages chat about "crossing the streams", and there's even an Indy look-alike quest-giver named 'Harrison Jones'.

3 SOMEONE DOING A STEAM-ENGINE IMPRESSION

Just as you can make your character bust moves by typing "/dance", you can also make them pretend to be a train by keying "/train". Doubt we'll be seeing Travis Fimmel going "chug-a-chug-a-chug-a..."

4 A KOBOLD SHOUTING, "YOU NO TAKE CANDLE!"

It's uncertain at this stage if the game's little candle-obsessed, rat-like monsters (below left) will cameo, but we'd bet that

even if they do, they won't shriek their catchphrase.

5 A CAMEO BY ROCK BAND ELITE TAUREN CHIEFTAIN

Yes, *World Of Warcraft* has its own band, comprising Blizzard employees and appearing within the game as an all-Horde outfit called The Tairen Chieftains. Their first song, written in 2003, was titled *Power Of The Horde*.

6 LEEROY JENKINS

The most famous *Warcraft* meme: Leeroy Jenkins (aka Ben Schulz) was a human paladin who caused his entire raid group to be wiped out after charging into a nest of dragons during a tactics huddle, yelling his own name as a battle cry. It was all captured on video. It's hilarious. He's not yet appeared on the movie's *dramatis personae*.

7 A TALKING PANDA

The 2012 expansion *Mists Of Pandaria* was the game's most controversial. Mainly because it introduced a new playable race: the fuzzy, bouncy Pandarans (below right). And, yes, they could do kung fu. But not on Duncan Jones' watch.



Fenegan insists that *Warcraft* "is a different kind of fantasy movie. I've got such respect for Peter Jackson and what he did with Tolkien. But orcs in that are just a faceless enemy. There isn't the level of character development that is integral to making a *Warcraft* film work. This isn't just good versus evil."

Having set aside a grander ambition to make two simultaneous movies, one from the orc perspective and the other from the human, Jones reworked the script as a pair of "converging journeys, towards an unavoidable conflict", with heroes and villains on both sides. Closer, in a sense, to *Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes* than *The Lord Of The Rings*. "Our orcs are escaping their homeworld [Draenor]," says Jones. "They've got nowhere else to go. They have families. They've found this new place where they can live, but it's already inhabited."

Today's battle, he explains, is the result of "an attempted meeting between a certain group of orcs who want to try and get along and the humans who are willing to try and make that work. But it all goes wrong. And it gets a bit ugly."

"We do keep separate from the humans," says Toby Kebbell, who brings his mo-cap experience as *Dawn Of The Planet Of The Apes*' belligerent chimp Koba to the role of Durotan, leader of *Warcraft*'s heroic Frostwolf Clan. "They've been training in their fight camps, we've been training in ours. It is half-and-half."

Kebbell is keen to stress that playing an orc is very different from playing an ape. "I said to Duncan, 'I've just done this very animalistic ape-performance,' and he said, 'I don't want that. For Durotan I want the humanity.' This is a married man with real problems to face." That aside, Kebbell sums it up as having to act "a little bit like a skinny guy in a bar trying to be tough".

Warcraft doesn't just have to mark itself out in a genre dominated by *The Lord Of The Rings* and *Game Of Thrones*. It also has to succeed as a video-game adaptation, to a degree that few have managed, from stone-cold turkey *Super Mario Bros.* (1993) to lacklustre blockbuster *Prince Of Persia: The Sands Of Time* (2010).

"My thinking is this has to be about two equally important stories."

DUNCAN JONES

WARCRAFT ISN'T JUST a big movie for Duncan Jones, whose previous two outings were modestly budgeted indies. It's a big movie for *anybody*. Its sets, all realised by production designer Gavin Bocquet (*Star Wars: Episodes I, II and III*) in the same chunky, outsize style as the game, are so extensive they're spread around Vancouver on three different sites.

The human side of the story (in which Fimmel and Cooper are joined by Ben Foster, Ben Schnetzer, and Paula Patton as Garona, a half-orc caught between the two factions), is being shot mostly in-camera, with its own armoury, including weapons forged by Middle-earth's own Weta Workshop. The orcish side (headed up by Toby Kebbell, Robert Kazinsky, Clancy Brown, Daniel Wu and Anna Galvin) is, in contrast, a full-on performance-capture production. And it's only a little before *Empire*'s arrival, 57 days into an 87-day shoot, that the two sides have met in front of a camera.

Fenegan thinks *Warcraft* has the solution just by virtue of its rich source material. This is not just a question of bulking up a slim, linear game narrative into a cinematic story. "*Warcraft* is a world in which you can go to different places and on limitless quests. So I think it gives us a chance to tell whatever story we want within that world, rather than being slavishly held to perhaps a thinner story that used to exist in a video-game."

Before returning to the fray, Jones offers another reason why his film is set to be a game (adaptation) changer. "Everyone who's into games has always felt like films based on them have been given short shrift," he says. "But those of us brought up on games are now hitting the point where we get to *make* these movies. Hopefully things are going to turn around. With what we're doing, with a script which is character-first, we've got a good crack at it now."

WARCRAFT IS OUT ON JUNE 3, 2016, AND WILL BE REVIEWED IN A FUTURE ISSUE.



Suicide



ON-SET
WORLD
EXCLUSIVE

Suicide Squad isn't just a new twist
on the superhero-movie genre. It is,
as director David Ayer puts it,
“Comic-Book Movie 2.0”

suicide squad

WORDS NICK DE SEMLYEN



Director David Ayer
briefs Viola Davis in
a briefing-room set.
That's a lot of briefing.

OME MOVIE SETS HAVE A TEA trolley. *Suicide Squad* has a gun trolley. Pushed around Toronto's Pinewood Studios by a former SWAT officer named Mike, it groans under the weight of enough ordnance to recreate the final reel of *Commando*. This includes an M320 grenade launcher, equipped with "Day/Night Sight" for nocturnal use. A Chiappa Rhino revolver, customised with alternating "LOVE"/"HATE" motif on the chamber. And the colossal single-use M72 Light Anti-Tank Weapon which *Empire* has just been handed by David Ayer.

"Never aim at anything you don't intend to destroy," chides the Navy submariner-turned-Hollywood director, as we wobbily point the state-of-the-art cannon towards a gaggle of grips. He surveys the mobile armoury. "Do we have enough guns on this show? That one you got's really comfortable. But this is fucking sick."

The "this" in question is actually a person. In fact, it's Will Smith. Dressed

as super-assassin Deadshot, he's strolled over to see why an idiot is waving a bazooka around. Among the multiple firearms strapped to his body armour are a pair of wrist-mounted, gripless Glocks. Capable of spewing real bullets, they're triggered by Smith's thumbs via an innovative system involving air tubes and a pneumatic actuator. He's basically part-man, part-gun.

"Hey, we're going to a bad place where bad things are happening," Smith grins between sips of a bucket-sized banana smoothie. "We gotta stay ready."

Steered by Ayer, the man behind the R-rated likes of *Fury* and *End Of Watch*, *Suicide Squad* promises a tougher, fresher take on superpowers. But its roots go back several decades. In 1959, comic book *The Brave And The Bold* #25, written by Robert Kanigher, first used the phrase "Suicide Squad" to describe a team of adventurers who battle dinosaurs and giants. In 1987, John Ostrander refined the concept: what if a group of supervillains were



Shooting a scene in Arkham Asylum. Note possibly psychotic teddy bear.



Killer Croc (Adele Cane) and Harley (Margot Robbie), on the loose.

captured and forced by the government (in that first run, Ronald Reagan himself) to undertake insanely dangerous black-ops missions?

Since then, DC Comics has run many variations on the theme. Deadshot and the Joker's shrink-turned-mistreated-girlfriend Harley Quinn have been mainstays of the unit officially

known as Task Force X, while such oddities as King Shark (an actual shark), KGBeast (big, Russian) and Count Vertigo (makes people feel dizzy) have rotated in and out. But the notion of a movie didn't gain serious traction until May 2014.

"We were in Michigan, where we'd just started shooting *Batman V* >

SQUAD FILES
The Joker
Aka Mr. J
Played by Jared Leto
Specialty Chaos

→ "I was just thinking," says Jared Leto at the start of his phone conversation with *Empire*, "that the Joker would probably just say, 'Fuck you,' and hang up." Fortunately, Leto is not the Joker. At least, not right now. It's already the stuff of legend, how the 43-year-old became Mr. J throughout the six-month *Suicide Squad* shoot. He sent bullets to Will Smith, a rat to Margot Robbie, a dead hog to the crew. He assigned Jim Parrack, the actor playing henchman Jonny Frost, random errands at all hours, including spray-painting roses black and filling a backpack with nine-inch nails. And he never once broke character, prompting Smith to tell us, "I've literally never met Jared."

"There was definitely a period of... detachment," Leto reflects. It's his very first interview about the role and we've caught him on tour with his band *Thirty Seconds To Mars*. Which explains his

unexpected location: Greece, wandering the Acropolis at 11pm local time. "I took a pretty deep dive. But this was a unique opportunity and I couldn't imagine doing it another way. It was fun, playing those psychological games. But at the same time it was very painful, like giving birth out of my prick-hole."

Spending night after night alone, Leto listened to gospel music from the 1920s ("I always get the sense that the Joker may be much older than people think") and read literature on shamans. His take on the clown (tattooed, with Orville-green hair) is a live-wire nutjob. "It's something different," he promises. "If you don't break rules, you're not going to strike new ground."

We ask if all this Method Joking requires a cooling-down period. There's a quick burst of laughter — from Leto, Joker, or both. "I think I'll be cooling down for the rest of my life."



SQUAD FILES

Colonel Rick Flag

Played by **Joel Kinnaman**
Speciality **Strategic command**

"Flag is the highest-level operator working for the government," explains Kinnaman. "He's had lots of friends die and has killed many, many people." Tough, then, but tough enough to babysit the Suicide Squad? "Deadshot gives him the most problems. Harley is easily distracted, but up for following orders if it means destroying things..."



Killer Croc

Aka **Waylon Jones**
Played by **Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje**
Speciality **Brawn**

As a child, Waylon Jones was beset by a disease that gave him reptilian skin. He saw a psychiatrist. And ate her. "He's a cannibal with rage issues," says Akinnuoye-Agbaje. "Although he only eats the most talented people. He's picky." His signature move? The croc-inspired death roll. "It's absolutely brutal."



Diablo

Aka **Chato Santana**
Played by **Jay Hernandez**
Speciality **Hellfire**

Diablo is a former LA gang member who can summon infernal flames. "Most of these guys are happy to get out there and kill people," says Hernandez, "but he just wants to stay out of the fight." His Belle Reve cell is a giant, floodable metal tube: "I got water in my ears, nostrils and sinuses. But it looks great."





Dr. Quinzel, Medicine
Woman: Harley
(Margot Robbie) takes
a session with the
Joker (Jared Leto).

Superman,” explains producer Charles Roven. “We were figuring out our path through the expanding DC Justice League universe. Then David Ayer came in and pitched his take on *Suicide Squad*. It had this darkness and edge, while still tonally in the zone of what we’re trying to do with these movies. And it’s impossible that you could get a big tentpole picture from pitch to start of principle photography any faster than we did.”

While simultaneously editing World War II tank epic *Fury*, Ayer wrote the script at a furious clip. His first challenge: picking which Squaddies to enrol. “Between the old series and (2011 reboot) *New 52*, there are probably 100 characters,” he says. “I don’t know why, but the first I connected with was Harley. When you follow her story, it’s about her breaking free of the Joker and becoming this fully actualised, independent person. That really is a metaphor for everyone’s journey here.”

His second challenge: reinventing the Joker. In *The Dark Knight*, Heath Ledger played the clown as a wild-card loner. Roven, who also produced that film, describes Jared Leto’s new incarnation as “more social... A very successful and smart businessman, besides being a sociopath.” The character remains shrouded in mystery — *Empire* is politely barred from the set for a scene involving Leto and a huge rotating gimbal — but we do know the following: we’ll see him in Arkham Asylum; his trippy, fancy-dress-clad henchmen include a panda, a weeping baby and a giant eyeball; gonzo director Alejandro Jodorowsky was a design influence; and his costumes/bling were inspired by Mexican cartel bosses. “The Joker is the third rail of comic-book movies,” muses Ayer. “There’s a power to that character, and by some freaking miracle, through the incredible things Jared has done and the photography and all the other millions of things that went into it, we’ve cooked up something transcendent. He’s scary.”

If Ayer has rebooted *The Ace Of Knives*, he promises the rest of the film will feel just as fresh. “You know, all these movies are about defeating the evil alien robot from fucking Planet X, before it destroys the world with its ticking clock. And who the fuck cares? But you do a story about struggle and isolation and people who have been shit on, that suddenly get thrown this lifeline... that’s not so bad. I like to think of this as Comic-Book Movie 2.0.”

June Moone (Cara Delevingne), post-transformation, pre-shower.

SQUAD FILES

Enchantress

aka June Moone

Played by Cara Delevingne

Speciality Sorcery

→ If you recently stayed at a Toronto hotel and decided to hit the spa, there's a chance you've already met Enchantress. And if so, it was likely an encounter that sent you running back to your room, screaming. "I decided that her domain was a warm, steamy lair," explains Cara Delevingne, "so I spent a lot of time in the hotel steam room. Occasionally someone's come in and I've just been on the floor in the corner, crawling around and doing creepy shit. I go, 'Sorry, bit weird!' But I've freaked out a few people, that's for sure."

Eerie, unearthly, colossally powerful and adorned with nifty crescent-moon headpiece, Enchantress is not a member of the Suicide Squad. The character, who made her comic-book debut in 1966 under the excellent billing 'The Switcheroo Witcheroo', is actually the alter ego of timid regular gal June Moone. "June is an adventure-seeker

who's always wanted some excitement," explains Delevingne. "And she gets what she wished for, but in a terrible way. At the start of the movie she discovers a cave and finds *something* within."

In the comics, Enchantress has been both a hero and a villain. It's unclear which she'll be in this movie. Her powers will draw the attention of Amanda Waller, but one thing's for sure: no-one can truly control her. "She's an ancient sorceress," Delevingne says. "A feral being. She's been trapped for so long and now she's finally let out."

During her four hours in the make-up chair each day, the actress had plenty of time to access her own inner Switcheroo Witcheroo. "I'd gather the accent, which is deeper and posher than June's. And I'd blast Nick Cave's *Red Right Hand*, that song about the devil. Also a lot of Megadeth. Just *evil* stuff."

N

OW TOOLED UP WITH KIT from the trolley, the entire Suicide Squad have assembled, like an anti-Avengers, for a scene aboard a Chinook helicopter. Strapped into their seats and behaving, for the time being, are the dirty half-dozen: Deadshot (Smith), Diablo (Jay Hernandez), Boomerang (Jai Courtney), Slipknot (Adam Beach), Harley Quinn (Margot Robbie) and Killer Croc (Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje). Count Vertigo, sadly, didn't get the call.

Eyeing them suspiciously are a small cadre of Navy SEALS, led by straight-arrow commander Rick Flag (Joel Kinnaman). And as the wind and smoke machines are cranked up, one final figure strides up the ramp. It's a last-minute addition to the team:

the mask-wearing, sword-packing Katana (Karen Fukuhara). Unlike the others, who are being coerced via nanobombs injected into their necks, she's a volunteer.

"She's got my back," Flag informs the Squad. "I'd advise not getting killed by her — her sword traps the souls of its victims."

Harley extends her hand, perky and smirky. "Harley Quinn, nice to meetcha. Love your perfume. What is that: Stench Of Death?"

The joy of *Suicide Squad* will lie in the interaction between these disparate reprobates, some of whom are metahumans with amazing abilities, some of whom are just good in a scrap. If a hit with viewers, each could potentially get a solo movie, or take on Batman in one of his forthcoming films (as spoiled by on-set iPhone snaps, the Caped Crusader will make a Caped Cameo). This movie, more even than *Batman V Superman: Dawn Of Justice*, will open up the DC universe like never before.





Squad Files

Deadshot

Aka Floyd Lawton

Played by Will Smith

Specialty Marksmanship

→ *Suicide Squad* marks the second movie to imbue Will Smith with superpowers. Though while *Hancock* gave him flight, super-strength and eternal youth, this time he's just a really, really damn good shot.

On Bad Boys

I trained in Miami with special-ops guys," Smith says, "but this is a whole other level. It took 20 minutes to get all the equipment on, and the wrist-Glocks were kinda like a bra strap — it took a while to master. But the psychological component was much more difficult. I had to learn to get comfortable with the idea of killing a stranger."

Deadshot may be a hitman, but he's a hitman to root for. "As the movie opens, he has a really big career score," Smith says. "He's looking to turn over a new leaf with his daughter after the hit, but it goes wrong. It goes terribly, terribly wrong. And it lands him in *Belle Reve* for life." Instead of retirement, he finds

himself stuck with Earth's most gnarly ne'er-do-wells. "Harley is the biggest troublemaker, but Deadshot's actually eyeballing her a little bit. There's a pretty ragged romantic triangle there."

His first big ensemble piece since *Independence Day*, Smith describes the cast as having "magical chemistry". He even wielded an ink-gun to tattoo "SKWAD" onto Joel Kinnaman's arm at the wrap party. "Will has many, many talents, [but] tattooing is not one of them," commented Kinnaman below his Instagram pic. "It was like watching a drunk baby fly a helicopter."

Smith howls with laughter at the memory. Though he admits he found it difficult keeping up with some of his co-stars. "Listen, I think I'm in my twenties, but on *Suicide Squad* it got really clear that I'm not. Like, nobody went to sleep. Ever. I was like, 'Guys, please, somebody take a nap!'"



"It's a monumental task just to track each character's story," says Ayer. "But the good news is that these guys all leap off the screen."

Already the source of much obsession from her animated-series, comic-book and video-game appearances — Kevin Smith even named his daughter after her — Harley Quinn is destined to

hit big. "She's the fan fave," says producer Richard Suckle. "Funny, crazy, scary... You can't come up with enough adjectives to describe all the different things you see her do. And Margot is just incredible."

But several others look capable of stealing the show. Not least the taciturn Killer Croc, a brute with the complexion, temperament and diet of a crocodile. ▶

Empire watches as Akinnuoye-Agbaje performs one of the character's big gags (literally), spewing chunks of half-digested goat-meat (actually Fruit Roll-Ups, prunes and juice) onto the floor of the Chinook. He then scoops some of the vomit back into his mouth, causing the hardened Navy SEALs to blanch. For real: Ayer hadn't given them a heads-up on the puke.

"Aw, man, that is *nasty*!" laughs Will Smith, watching playback. "That one's for the eight-year-olds..."

E

EVERY SQUAD NEEDS

goals. But if Ayer is happy to accept the men-on-a-mission-movie comparisons — "It's *The Dirty Dozen*, but with comic supervillains" — he's more circumspect when it comes to the mission itself.

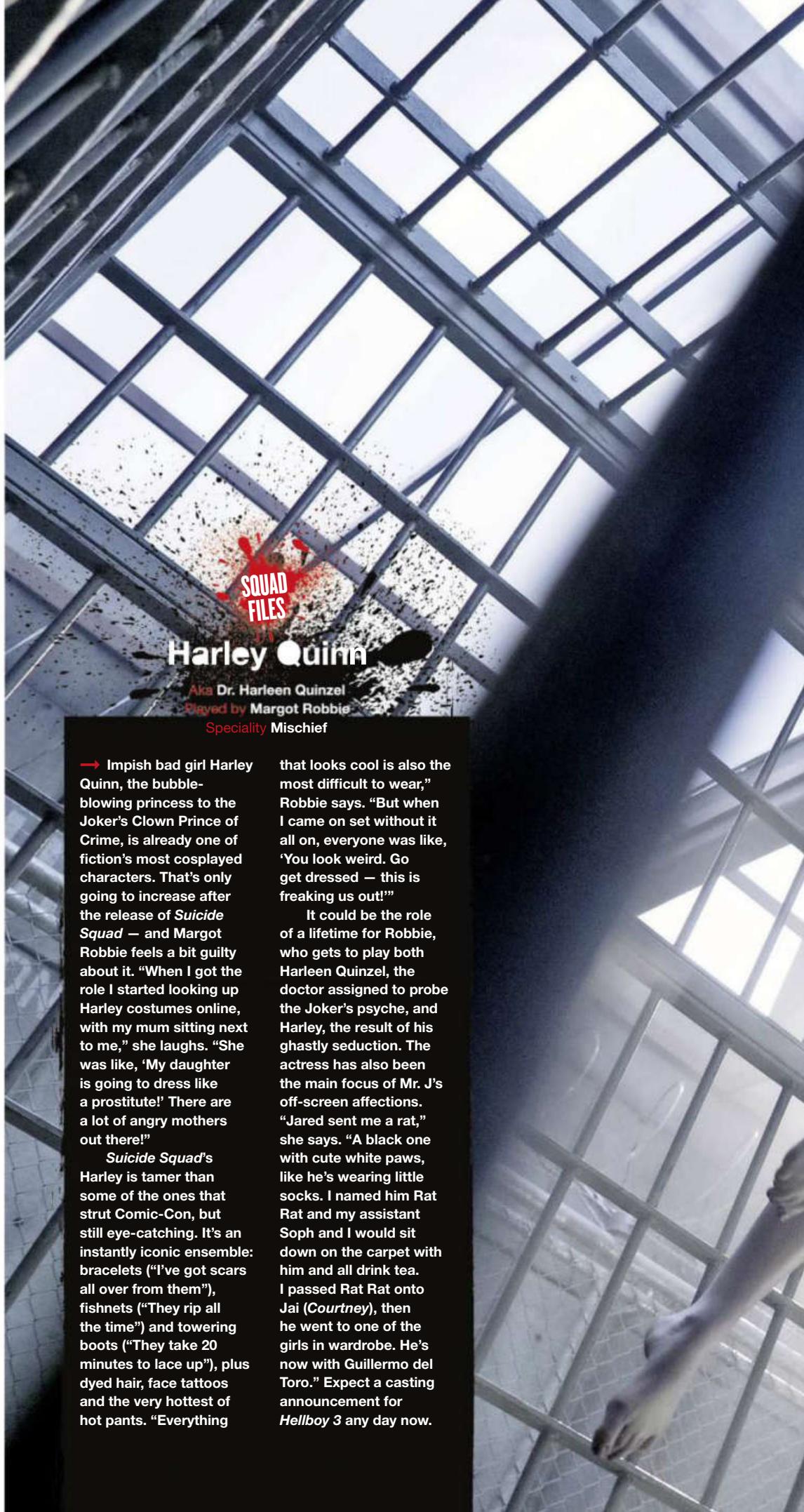
What he will share is this intel: "They're after a high-value target that they have to go in and rescue. When they make the attempt, they realise that's not the end."

When asked who or what his expendables are facing, the director quips, "Donald Trump. His hair has magical powers." Rest assured that there will be a surprising threat, something even more formidable than a Republican comb-over. But of more immediate concern to the Squad is their boss. "Fuck good versus bad," says Ayer. "Bad versus evil is a lot more interesting. And Amanda Waller is the worst there is."

How scary can Amanda be? Plenty scary. Waller is the network specialist who runs Task Force X, and two-time Oscar nominee Viola Davis plays the role to the hilt: an iron fist in a titanium glove. "She's relentless in her villainy," says the actress. "When you look at her, there's nothing that seems dangerous. Her only power is her intelligence and her complete lack of guilt. I read a great book called *Confessions Of A Sociopath*, which was frightening but very helpful. Read it with a glass of wine or two!"

And in case you were wondering, yes, Davis also got to visit Mike and his gun trolley. "I can now shoot, unload, reload and shoot again, all in six seconds," she beams. "High-powered weapons are *very* exhilarating."

SUICIDE SQUAD IS OUT ON AUGUST 5, 2016, AND WILL BE REVIEWED IN A FUTURE ISSUE.



→ Impish bad girl Harley Quinn, the bubble-blowing princess to the Joker's Clown Prince of Crime, is already one of fiction's most cosplayed characters. That's only going to increase after the release of *Suicide Squad* — and Margot Robbie feels a bit guilty about it. "When I got the role I started looking up Harley costumes online, with my mum sitting next to me," she laughs. "She was like, 'My daughter is going to dress like a prostitute!' There are a lot of angry mothers out there!"

Suicide Squad's Harley is tamer than some of the ones that strut Comic-Con, but still eye-catching. It's an instantly iconic ensemble: bracelets ("I've got scars all over from them"), fishnets ("They rip all the time") and towering boots ("They take 20 minutes to lace up"), plus dyed hair, face tattoos and the very hottest of hot pants. "Everything

that looks cool is also the most difficult to wear," Robbie says. "But when I came on set without it all on, everyone was like, 'You look weird. Go get dressed — this is freaking us out!'"

It could be the role of a lifetime for Robbie, who gets to play both Harleen Quinzel, the doctor assigned to probe the Joker's psyche, and Harley, the result of his ghastly seduction. The actress has also been the main focus of Mr. J's off-screen affections. "Jared sent me a rat," she says. "A black one with cute white paws, like he's wearing little socks. I named him Rat Rat and my assistant Soph and I would sit down on the carpet with him and all drink tea. I passed Rat Rat onto Jai (Courtney), then he went to one of the girls in wardrobe. He's now with Guillermo del Toro." Expect a casting announcement for *Hellboy 3* any day now.



SQUAD FILES



Boomerang

Aka **George 'Digger' Harkness**

Played by **Jai Courtney**

Speciality **Curved throwing tools**

An Antipodean brawler with an array of ludicrous weapons and a beer-holster, Boomerang is bringing the Down Under thunder. "He's an absolute bogan, in the purest sense," laughs Courtney. "Dave's first instruction was, 'Find your inner shitbag.'" You'll never see his drone-boomerang coming. Or going.



Slipknot

Aka **Christopher Weiss**

Played by **Adam Beach**

Speciality **Ropes**

Yes, his superpower is knots. And yes, you should be afraid. "He's formidable," says Adam Beach. "He can climb anything. And he hangs people for a living. I joke that he was caught strangling Wonder Woman." How good is Beach at ropes now? "I downloaded this app called Grog Knots. Now I could tie up a horse."



Katana

Aka **Tatsu Yamashiro**

Played by **Karen Fukuhara**

Speciality **Swordplay**

Katana serves as Rick Flag's bodyguard. "She has morals and codes," says Karen Fukuhara. "She can also slice through hundreds of people without taking a breath." Her look contains hints of her past: her blade's called Soultaker, and the Japanese characters on her sash translate as, "I weep thinking of him."

Patient may experience mood swings: Harley Quinn amuses herself in her cage.





THE END GAME

Jennifer and Francis Lawrence on how *The Hunger Games* is getting the climax it deserves in *Mockingjay* – Part 2. Though it may not be over for Katniss and co. quite yet...

WORDS OLLY RICHARDS

YOU MIGHT EXPECT THERE to be something a little battle-worn about the cast and director of *The Hunger Games*. They've been at this for a while – most of them for four films. But just as the final instalment shoves every character to the brink, with the uprising of the three previous episodes boiling over into all-out war, you can sense the feeling of 'one final push' crackling among them.

"The first one came out in 2012? Are you sure?" says Jennifer Lawrence, the franchise's star, when we remark that it

seems like the series has been around a lot longer than three years. "It feels like 150 years ago. That is nuts." You can understand her incredulity. Since she signed on with only one leading role to her name (in low-budget indie breakout *Winter's Bone*, back in 2010), she's become an Oscar-winner (for *Silver Linings Playbook*), figurehead of a billion-dollar series and officially the highest-paid actress in the world. "I remember when I was 20 and signing up and thinking, 'I'm going to be twenty-five when all this is over,' and

▷

that felt so grown-up. Now I am 25 and I'm not grown up. I haven't matured at all. And now it's all over."

For *Mockingjay*'s director,

Francis Lawrence, *The Hunger Games* isn't over yet. He is still putting the final film together, and his arc is a little different from that of his lead actress. *Mockingjay – Part 2* is (hopefully) not just a glorious farewell, but also, to some degree, his redemption story. After the critical and commercial success of *Catching Fire*, *Mockingjay – Part 1* elicited, well, a bit of a shrug. Its box office was \$100 million down on its predecessor and there were accusations that it was only half a movie, a flightless bird earthbound by a lack of action – of any actual Hunger Games.

"I always knew going into that one that it was going to be risky," he says, his tone not quite testy but perhaps disappointed he's having to defend this. "It was the first that's completely tonally different. In the scope of the whole story [it's at] a second-act low point, where the lead character is sidelined and being manipulated and living underground. There are no Games and it's much more political and about propaganda... I think the people who got the ideas and themes and what we were doing with the movie enjoyed it. I think there was some definite 'cynical cash-grab' backlash toward the movie, which was a little disappointing, because I'm actually really proud of it and what it's about."

He reflects for a second, running a hand through his grey hair (it was grey before *The Hunger Games* – the movie hasn't done that to him). "I don't know how you do that last book in one movie," he insists. "Unless you entirely go, 'The propaganda thing isn't interesting and Peeta didn't need to get taken away.' You'd have to excise all those ideas. To me, that wouldn't be interesting and you needed that chapter. I still stand behind it."

Lawrence says that as he'd already shot the final movie, the reaction to the third film exerted no influence on him, but he does assure us that the second half will get back to something more closely resembling the first two episodes.

Mockingjay – Part 2, naturally, brings everything to a head. Having rescued her will-they-won't-they? Peeta, Katniss and most of the surviving citizens of the Districts take the fight to the door of Coriolanus Snow, the silken villain who's been pulling the strings since the beginning. Though there are no official Games, there is the battle royale of the series, where the prize is... life itself. For some. Loads of them will die.



"I was pissed. I was like, 'Stop.' I just did not want it to be done."

JENNIFER LAWRENCE

Top: Tributes-turned-rebels Gale (Liam Hemsworth), Peeta (Josh Hutcherson), Katniss (Jennifer Lawrence), Cressida (Natalie Dormer) and Pollux (Elden Henson) prepare for the final push. Above: Katniss, in even more hot (or possibly rather cold) water. Right: Cressida and Katniss take aim.

"The Capitol becomes the Arena," says the director. "The way this is 'upped', isn't just in making it bigger and ballsier. It's the movie where all the ideas and rivalries and relationships crash together. So in that sense it's the most epic and emotional of the bunch. There's something really satisfying about the fact that this is the first in the series that ends. There's no cliffhanger, there's no tease. It ends."

One person is not very happy
it's all over. While Liam Hemsworth (Gale) and Josh Hutcherson (Peeta) are chirpy about the "special experience" they've had, Jennifer Lawrence's face turns to thunder when the subject of moving on is raised. "On the last day, everyone else was like, 'Oh my God!'"

she says, shredding a poor defenceless croissant as she talks. "I was pissed. I was like, 'I am not happy about this. Stop.' I just did not want it to be done."

This year marks a milestone for Lawrence, in that she's now finished with both *The Hunger Games* and *X-Men* (she wrapped *X-Men: Apocalypse* just a few days before we meet).

"I actually don't have the feeling of 'FREE!' that I was expecting," she says, and adds she hasn't ruled out signing up for another long-running series. "I really enjoy franchises. You get to work with all the same people again. That's the scary part about filming: you go to this new city and you're away from everything and everyone you know, then by the end everyone's very close. [On franchises]

everybody knows each other. That's one of the reasons I was sad to say goodbye to these movies. I'm going to miss that."

She won't be short of things to do, though. Lawrence is now the biggest female movie star in the world, and incredibly in demand. She used to address questions about her fame bashfully. Not so much these days. "Oh, I feel super-embarrassed. I'm really shy," she says in a mock-girlish tone, casting her eyes down.

And not only is she the highest-paid actress in the world, she is earning more than some of her male counterparts, too. She'll shortly start shooting *Passengers*, a space-set love story, with Chris Pratt.



She'll get \$20 million, versus 30 per cent of the film's profit. He'll get \$12 million. "I'm happy that there's a conversation about women and pay," says Lawrence. "It's embarrassing that it's happening in 2015... All of that is just silly, but I'm happy that it's happening and that we're having this conversation. But all of that stuff will go away. I'm not going to be the highest-paid person forever."

Part of *The Hunger Games*' legacy will be that it's made moot the discussion of whether a female-led action movie can succeed. "I think this series helped open the door for [studios] not to be 'scared' of that," says Francis Lawrence. "People just like good stories." It's also given the Young Adult genre a degree of credibility. You don't get many adults debating the politics of *Divergent* or *The Maze Runner*. *The Hunger Games* has many YA tropes (an alternative reality where adults cause some terrible event that only a teen can rectify; experiencing first love and, often, first loss), but it's tackled bigger, more mature themes.

"You look at what this story's about and it's so much," says Francis Lawrence.

"You can look at it as about the nature of celebrity, which the lives of Jen, Josh and Liam very much reflect. You can look at it being about the nature of war. You can look at the propaganda and manipulation of media. There are so many things in this film that imitated life but have now been imitated in life. In Thailand, people have been using [the rebellion's] three-finger salute." The silent signal was used to protest against the country's military government, which decreed that anyone using it would be subject to arrest. "You had people spray-painting, 'If we burn, you burn [with us]'," in Ferguson, he continues. "It's relevant." With *The Hunger Games*, Young Adult has grown up.

The book arc of *The Hunger Games*
is now complete, and while Jennifer Lawrence says she'd be open to the possibility of further adventures with the X-Men, "now that it's my choice", she doesn't even mention the possibility of picking up Katniss' bow again. But could the series go on? Even the 'disappointing' third movie made \$752 million.

When promoting the first part of *Mockingjay*, the filmmakers offered coy 'probably not' responses to any suggestion of future instalments; now, while not confirming anything, they're far from issuing denials.

"Weeeell, erm, look," says Francis Lawrence. "It would be entirely up to (*Hunger Games* author) Suzanne Collins. I wouldn't do anything unless she came up with something, backed it, and worked on it. So until that happens..." But if she does, will that mean his *Hunger Games* tenure isn't necessarily over? "If everyone wanted to get back in, I'd be into it." ■

THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY — PART 2
IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 19 AND WILL BE
REVIEWED IN A FUTURE ISSUE.

LAST IMPRESSIONS

HOW DID OTHER BIG FRANCHISE FINALES TURN OUT?

BANG!

THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING (2003)

Multiple endings be damned, Peter Jackson reaches his destination in spectacular fashion, thanks to magnificent battle action and just the right amount of sentiment.

HARRY POTTER AND THE DEATHLY HALLOWS — PART 2 (2011)

While *Part 1* waited things out in the forest, the conclusion tears the school down with an epic stand-off, waving a tearful goodbye to a franchise a decade in the making.

BACK TO THE FUTURE PART III (1990)

Easing up on all the time-paradox complexity without losing our interest, Doc and Marty go for one last ride in a Western homage that brings the time-travelling trilogy to a suitably feel-good end.

ARMY OF DARKNESS (1992)

Ash gets medieval on our asses as he's sent back in time to save a village from the "Deadites". Scrappy but insanely fun, it's a confident climax to the *Evil Dead* series. Hail to the king, baby!

THE GODFATHER PART III (1990)

Remembered as underrated by some, but to most a convoluted epilogue to two classics which featured a passionless performance from Sofia Coppola and Al Pacino in Jacob Marley-esque ageing make-up.

LETHAL WEAPON 4 (1998)

This time, they really were too old for this shit. Riggs and Murtaugh combat the Triads in a soapy movie largely held up by nostalgia and Jet Li's energetic villain.

SAW 3D: THE FINAL CHAPTER (2010)

Attempting to tie together six previous chapters of torture porn, even the sight of 3D viscera splurging out from the screen can't disguise the lack of steam left in this (thankfully) "final chapter".

JAWS: THE REVENGE (1987)

Spielberg's industry-changing original was by now a distant memory as a nonsensical plot, hokey effects and a wise-cracking Michael Caine make for a textbook example of 'a sequel too far'. JAMES LUXFORD

WHIMPER

OSCARS

2016

From front-runners to dark horses, over the next 30 pages we reveal the biggest, boldest awards contenders in town





HELL Or High Water



This year's Best Director Alejandro González Iñárritu reveals his 2016 bid: *The Revenant* — whose extreme location shoot is as much a survival story as the film itself

WORDS DAMON WISE

Everyone in Hollywood has a story about *The Revenant*. The sixth feature by Alejandro González Iñárritu has already entered modern movie mythology as one of the most difficult shoots ever embarked upon. Many of those stories paint the director as a deranged, deluded Napoleon figure driven insane by his recent Oscar glory, given he'd won for *Birdman* while this latest project was already struggling in the wilderness.

The word "hellish" comes up a lot in these tales: remote locations exhaustively researched and then abandoned on a whim; a producer banned from the set; actors stretched to breaking point by conditions that plunged to minus 40; a stuntman dragged naked behind a horse; primitive facilities; and an impatient, ungrateful megalomaniac director demanding *more, more, more...*

But when *Empire* visits the 52 year-old Mexican at his offices on Olympic Boulevard in Santa Monica during August, there is no wild glint in his eye. Instead, Iñárritu calmly introduces some scenes from the film that's caused such fuss. It is the story of Hugh Glass (Leonardo DiCaprio), a trapper who was supposedly eaten by a bear and left for dead by fellow hunters in the 1820s.

The result, alongside Quentin Tarantino's 70mm Western *The Hateful Eight*, which takes place in the same century, will be one of the most talked-about technical achievements of 2015. Shooting only in natural light, using long, steady takes, it moves from autumn to winter as Glass tracks down the men who deserted him. Looking back, Iñárritu thinks now, it was a challenge that stopped him getting too caught up in the Oscar whirlwind for *Birdman*. Every so often he would fly to LA to shake hands, raise a cocktail and pick up an award. Then he'd be back on a plane to the middle of nowhere, pursuing his wild dream.

"I was so submerged in the shooting of the film," he recalls, "that when I had to come back, it was great to have some drinks, celebrate. It was a great ride."

But I had to go back and keep working, and my mind was very much into the film. I lived my *Birdman* experience through the filter of that fucking winter." He remembers being on a podium somewhere and receiving a text telling him that his latest location had just been flooded. "Receiving problems while you are celebrating is a strange thing," he says. "But in a way, it was healthy. I could have been swallowed up by that madness. In some ways I escaped the harshness of the shoot and at the same time I was not swallowed up by the frivolity of the awards. It was a good balance."

INTERESTINGLY, *THE Revenant* began five years ago, before *Birdman* was even an idea, let alone a script. It was originally pitched as an adventure story, but Iñárritu wanted to unpick all that. "The storyline, the spine, was very clear and very simple," he recalls. "But what I was fascinated by were the possibilities — that environment, that landscape, that time in the world. The early 19th century was extraordinarily interesting, and I thought it would have a lot of elements that would resonate very much with what's happening now."

The key to this was a book called *Here Lies Hugh Glass: A Mountain Man, A Bear, And The Rise Of The American Nation* by Jon T. Coleman, a deconstruction of pioneer myth. "I was fascinated by that," says Iñárritu, "and I tried to use what *really* happened to this guy and give it a context of real adventure on a human scale, not this stupid glorification of the superhero. I wanted to explore what was going on

Frontiersman Hugh Glass (Leonardo DiCaprio), beset by nature and betrayed by 'friends'.



Glass will have to defy the odds on his mission of revenge.



“Leo touches so many notes of emotion without one word. That is unprecedented.”

ALEJANDRO GONZÁLES IÑÁRRITU



Tom Hardy (as treacherous git John Fitzgerald) with director Alejandro González Iñárritu.



Will Poulter's Jim Bridger has much to answer for.

at that time, which was the beginning of capitalism as we live it. These guys were serving the purpose of an industry that was basically the main economic resource of the United States at that time, which was killing animals and selling fur hats to women in Europe."

To tell the story, Iñárritu chose digital for the first time in his career, using the 65mm ALEXA camera. His decision was born of a purely practical concern. He only wanted to use natural light, but shooting on film would have meant it was too dark by 3pm. Whereas digital delivered an extra 90 minutes of light.

But light was just one of his problems. "It was an extremely challenging shoot," he admits, with some understatement. It took Iñárritu five years to find the perfect locations, which not only had to look spectacular, but also provide suitable terrain to mount horse chases and battle scenes — one of which quickly expanded from involving 60 cast members to 200. The demands of the shoot required meticulous planning and huge chunks of rehearsal time. But Iñárritu couldn't prepare for everything. "People get sick, or the cameras shut down because of the cold, or you get so frozen you cannot move your fucking feet. Everything takes triple time."

You might wonder why he'd want to put himself, and his crew, through that. Iñárritu sees it all as a necessary part of finding the right tools to achieve his overall vision and style. One tool, he says, "was to use natural light in order to get the complexity and the beauty of the landscape without adulterating it, without manicuring it, without pasteurising it." Another was to employ his signature long takes, which made *Birdman* so visually remarkable, "to let people really get into characters' minds and try to get people to relive and experience that world in the best way possible, the most *pure* way. Not by fragmentation or extreme artificiality. Like a sonic painting — that's what I wanted to create."

THE FOOTAGE IÑÁRRITU shows us is unfinished — the sound mix is windy and there are some crude, temporary digital effects — but *The Revenant* is undeniably epic. Like a mash-up of *Soldier Blue* and *Saving Private Ryan*, the first thing we see is a long scene in which a group of trappers, led by Tom Hardy, is ambushed by Native Americans. It has soul and scope, like vintage Terrence Malick, and shows off those stunning locations for which Iñárritu searched so hard.





“I used natural light to get the complexity and beauty of the landscape.”

ALEJANDRO GONZÁLES IÑÁRRITU

Although the film is set in the US, the shoot mostly took place in Canada. The States, Iñárritu says, couldn't provide him with the necessary vast, untrammelled wilderness, being a nation now of dammed rivers and parks. "Obviously there are the most parks in the US," he adds, "but it's almost impossible to shoot there. There is no permission. You cannot touch the fucking grass, it's almost ridiculous!" So instead he sought out truly remote places. "My obsession was to go to locations that nobody had seen, that didn't feel like man had touched. They are absolutely virgin in that sense."

Though beautiful, these locations seem so cruel and unforgiving. It is difficult to believe that Hugh Glass

could have survived there after such a brutal mauling. "That's what made his story so interesting," exclaims Iñárritu, "because the odds are 99 per cent against him. But I think the job of the filmmaker is to make the improbable probable. So it's an exploration of that: what conditions allowed this guy to survive, even when he is absolutely broken in every sense?"

He admits to being amazed by what his lead actor achieved in the role. "I think Leo did something that I have never seen," he says. "It's a very silent character, everything is body language. That is really impressive. He touches so many notes of emotion without one word. That is unprecedented, I think."

Left: Stag weekends were the real deal in the 1820s. **Above:** Iñárritu schools his cast in anguish and pain.

By way of explanation, Iñárritu asks his editor to show *Empire* another scene, in which a seriously crippled DiCaprio emerges, eyes blazing, from a shallow grave. It's a bravura performance, the type that wins awards. But as Iñárritu reminds us, the actor was also drawn to the project by broader concerns, not just the chance to finally bag an Oscar. "As you know, he's a big environmental advocate," the director says. "I think we share the same point of view."

The environment is an especially big concern to him today because, when we meet, his film still isn't finished — despite having an original wrap date back in March. "We have to go back to Ushuaia in Argentina to look for the last scene," he says, "which we lost because of global warming." They'd gone to Calgary expecting snow, but none fell. "It was the hottest winter in the history of Canada. That's the reality of global warming. There were bees, flies and flowers... it was very scary."

Global warming, he believes, can be traced back to the reckless profiteering of Hugh Glass and his paymasters. "They never understood how to interact with nature. Look at the forests — they turned the fucking trees into fucking tables. They had no respect for the fucking birds and the animals — they killed them and turned them into hats. That was a very big mistake, I think."

Warming to his theme, Iñárritu sheds his calm exterior, revealing something perhaps closer to the raging director depicted in those reports from *Revenant*'s shoot. "Look at the consequences of capitalism," he spits. "One per cent of the people in the world possess 40 per cent of the wealth. The rules of the market have swallowed everything. You can measure the success of everything by how much money it made. In 2008, the fucking world went bankrupt. And in two days the [world's] leaders saved the fucking banks. If nature was a bank, we would have saved it. But nature is just collapsing. In 20 years we'll be flooded. And nobody's doing anything, because it's not profitable."

It's a subject that Iñárritu hopes his film will open our eyes to. Forget all the rumours, the firings and the fights. "I don't care how much of a challenge it was," he shrugs. "Nobody cares about that. The most important thing is, if you see the beauty of what we did, and the value of that, on the screen, then I'm happy. If we achieve that, we've succeeded."

THE REVENANT IS OUT ON JANUARY 15, 2016, AND WILL BE REVIEWED IN A FUTURE ISSUE.

SAOIRSE RONAN

Putting away childish things in *Brooklyn*

→ SAOIRSE RONAN IS 21 YEARS OLD now, and feels it's about time people stopped expecting her to play teenagers. "I was really aware when I was about 19 that I didn't want to play anyone younger than myself. But it's all like, 'Do you want to play this 16-year-old who hasn't lost her virginity? Not really...'"

Ronan first gained attention aged 13 as Briony Tallis, the precocious meddler in Joe Wright's *Atonement*, a role which brought her an Oscar nomination. Then she impressed in *The Lovely Bones*, *Hanna* and *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, among others. Yet the hunt for a first adult role was tough, so when one finally showed up, she grabbed it like a life raft. "When *Brooklyn* came along I was like, 'Yes! Great! A 23-year-old? Perfect! Where have you been?'"

Ronan's role in *Brooklyn* is the sort an actress of any age would cherish. She plays Eilis, a young woman who travels from small-town Ireland to New York to start a better life during the 1950s. "I'd been looking for a script about an Irish girl for a long time," says Ronan. "But I didn't want one of those, as I call them, 'diddly-idle stories', where it's the character who lives on a farm, never leaves the village and there's a drunk in the pub. God, I'm sick of that." *Brooklyn* appealed because, although it's what Ronan calls "Irish Irish Irish all through", its themes are universal, such as what it means to leave home and become your own person. "It's about how once you make that decision to go, you can never go back."

Festival screening reactions have tipped Ronan for an Oscar nomination. Regardless, she has already secured one victory: she's made the transition to adult star without a stumble. "I definitely think my years of playing children are behind me," she confirms. It's like she says: you can never go back. **OLLY RICHARDS**

BROOKLYN IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 6
AND IS REVIEWED ON PAGE 53.

The ACTRESSES

Attracting much buzz for the Best Actress gong

BRIE LARSON

Fighting claustrophobia in the intense, intimate *Room*

→ "IT'S LIKE TALKING ABOUT getting married one day when you don't have a boyfriend," says Brie Larson about the Oscar chatter surrounding her stellar turn in *Room*. "It's fun to talk about but it doesn't mean anything yet."

Based on Emma Donoghue's bestseller, *Room* is a heartbreaker, with Larson delivering a powerful, touching, truthful performance. The title refers to the garden shed in which Larson's Ma and her five year-old son Jack (Jacob Tremblay) have been held captive for the entirety of the boy's life. To dive deep into the role, Larson spoke to trauma specialists, studied accounts of sexual abuse — "You just become angry and upset but it became my fuel to have the stamina for a 49-day shoot" — and bonded with young Tremblay through the medium of "stormtrooper and Han Solo" LEGO figures. She also took cues from the pressure-cooker atmosphere of the 11-foot-by-15-foot set.

"It felt like clowns packed into a clown car," she says. "Someone's elbow

or butt was always in your face. It did create a sense of intimacy which added to the performances on the screen."

Room arrives at an interesting point in Larson's career. She has previously balanced lead roles in indie fare like *The Spectacular Now* and *Short Term 12* with smaller parts in the bigger-budget likes of *Scott Pilgrim Vs. The World*, *21 Jump Street* and *Trainwreck*. But, following turns for Todd Solondz (*Wiener-Dog*) and Ben Wheatley (*Free Fire*), she will take on lead duties against a 40-foot ape in *Kong: Skull Island*.

"People don't have as much respect for those bigger movies as they should," she says. "Star Wars is a big epic movie but it tells the same story as *Room* is telling. It is the same archetypes, the same journey. To me, doing *Kong: Skull Island* is no different. It's exciting to know that I can tell a story that is going to be seen by more people." **IAN FREER**

ROOM IS OUT ON JANUARY 15, 2016, AND WILL BE REVIEWED IN A FUTURE ISSUE.



CAREY MULLIGAN

Making an impact in *Suffragette*

→ CAREY MULLIGAN BECOMES very impassioned when discussing *Suffragette*, which is appropriate for the subject matter. "This isn't just some documentary on how the world *was*," she says, shifting close to the edge of her seat. "It's a look at where we are *now*. In Saudi Arabia, women are getting the vote in 2015, the same year we're releasing this film. It's *insane*."

Mulligan plays Maud Watts, an Edwardian factory worker who is accidentally caught up in the women's rights protest. Sarah Gavron's film, written by Abi Morgan, shows that the fight for equality went far beyond peaceful protest. "I hadn't realised the scale of what they went through," says Mulligan. "When the suffragettes became militant they started throwing them in prison. Emmeline Pankhurst went to prison, I think, nine or ten times. They experienced police brutality. They started going on hunger strike and they were force-fed. Women died because of it."

Pankhurst, the leader of the movement, is not the focus of Morgan's story but her presence, while minimal,

required an actress with a powerful presence. One whom Mulligan was thrilled to work with, even if only briefly. "Meryl Streep was always the dream, but none of us ever thought it would happen," says Mulligan. "I remember Sarah calling me and neither of us could believe it. I said, 'Right, we have to shoot this right now before she changes her mind!'"

While she's not been the subject of Oscar attention as often as the much-garlanded Streep, this is hardly Mulligan's first time. Her breakout role in 2009's *An Education* made her an Academy Award nominee and BAFTA winner. Back then she was just a 24-year-old who'd been pushed from obscurity into becoming Britain's next A-lister. "To be honest, I was overwhelmed by it all," she says. She is, of course, far too British to be drawn on the possibilities of it happening again, but she certainly doesn't look overwhelmed now. **OLLY RICHARDS**

SUFFRAGETTE IS OUT NOW AND WAS REVIEWED IN THE LAST ISSUE.



CAROL

LO VE

*Women
In*

How Cate Blanchett
and Rooney Mara
discovered astonishing
chemistry during Todd
Haynes' latest trip
to the 1950s

WORDS DAMON WISE





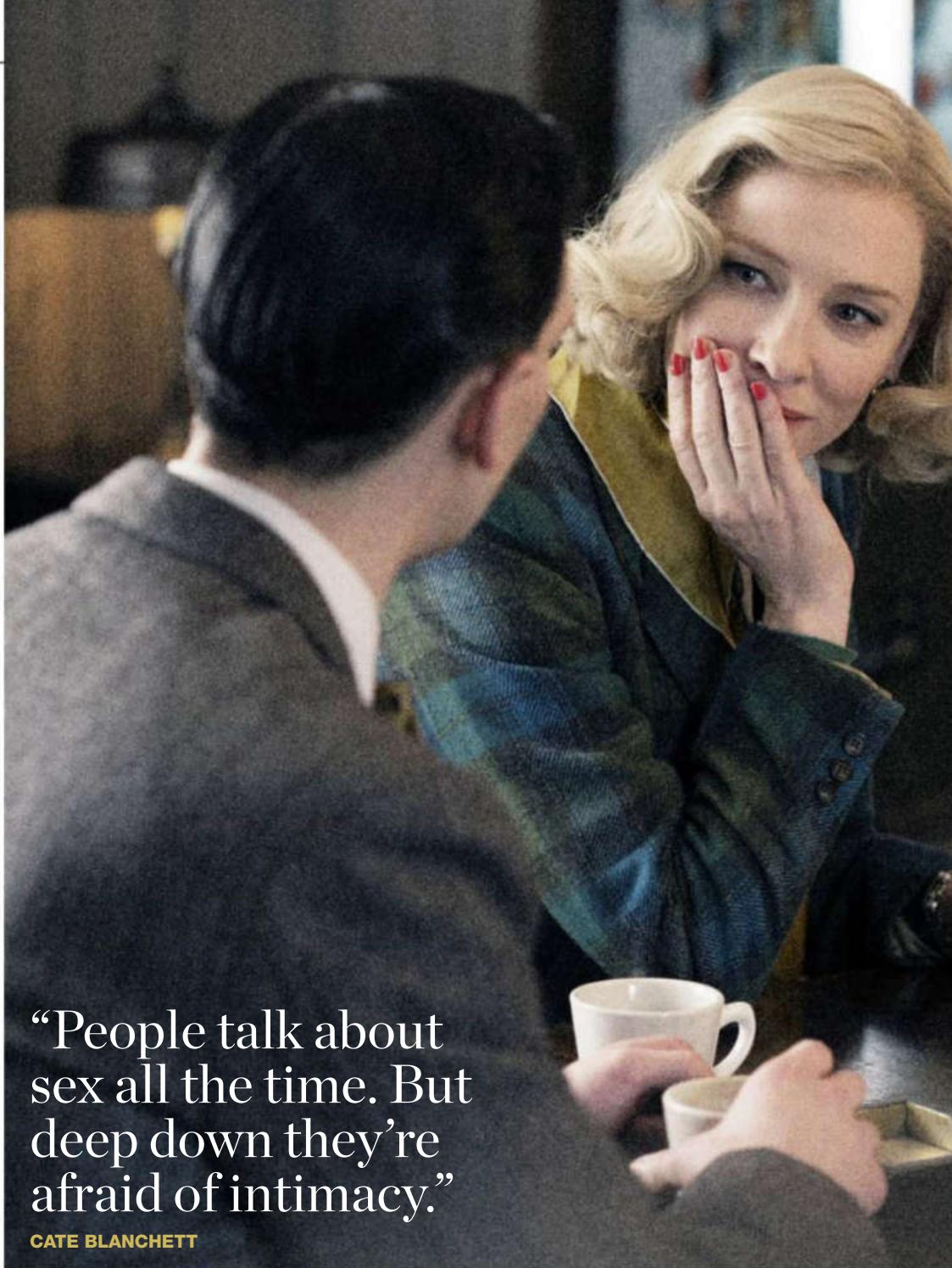
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ROONEY MARA REMEMBERS WELL the first time she saw Cate Blanchett. She was 13 years old and she'd gone to her local cinema in Bedford, New York, to see Shekhar Kapur's *Elizabeth*. "When she came on screen," Mara told an audience at the Santa Barbara International Film Festival last year, "I remember the feeling that washed over me, seeing her with her piercingly blue eyes and alabaster skin. Her grace and magnetism took over, even in her silence, even in her stare."

It was the moment Mara knew for sure that she wanted to be an actor. And not just any actor — she wanted to be an actor like *that*. "From that day on, I remember following her and watching her," Mara continued. "Being seduced over and over with each performance."

In her latest film, Mara experienced this a little more literally. Based on the semi-autobiographical 1952 novel *The Price Of Salt* (written by crime writer Patricia Highsmith under a pseudonym, so as not to threaten the mainstream success she'd enjoyed with her Hitchcock-endorsed debut, *Strangers On A Train*), Todd Haynes' exquisite drama tells the story of shop girl Therese (Mara), who falls for someone older, out of her league. It sounds like a classic story of the era but, daringly for its time, the object of Therese's affection is a socialite named Carol (Blanchett), which became the book's title when the author reprinted it under her own name in the more enlightened '90s.

Empire meets Mara, Blanchett and Haynes at the Cannes Film Festival, the afternoon after *Carol*'s premiere. The atmosphere, says Haynes, is "unnatural and overdetermined — it's like launching something from a wedding cake", but for all his modesty, it's clear this film is special, having been received rapturously for its script, score, cinematography and wardrobe. But most of all, for its two leads, who replicate their onscreen yin-and-yang in real life: Mara in a simple black outfit, her hair in a bun; Blanchett a little more formal in a tailored dress,



"People talk about sex all the time. But deep down they're afraid of intimacy."

CATE BLANCHETT

her blonde locks in a loose side parting.

They swear it's a coincidence. "I feel chemistry isn't something you can really predict," says the softly spoken Mara. "It's just a freak thing that happens. You can't create it, it's either there or it's not."

FROM HIS 1988 DEBUT, *Superstar*, to HBO's 2011 miniseries *Mildred Pierce*, Todd Haynes has made a name for himself as a sensitive director of female stories. But he'd never read Highsmith's book before being approached by the film's producers, with a script adapted by Emmy-nominated writer Phyllis Nagy.

"I was woefully ignorant of *The Price Of Salt*," he admits. "But I was so moved by it. I think it's so interesting in relation to

her other novels. I mean, this is the most personal and autobiographical of her novels. But at the same time she's creating a portrait of falling in love that parallels the furtive, over-anxious paranoia of the criminal mind with the mind of the lover."

Playing the older, wiser woman, Blanchett quickly picked up on these undertones. "Patricia Highsmith was a crime writer, sure," she says. "But she also wrote about the human heart. And this time the crime is the love that exists between these women. Although none of us had any interest in making a museum piece about the sexual mores of the 1950s, there had to be doors, there had to be windows, to let the audience in."

Familiar with Haynes from playing '60s Bob Dylan in his dazzlingly surreal



2007 biopic *I'm Not There*, Blanchett was expecting *Carol* to look like his lurid, late-'50s-set melodrama *Far From Heaven* (2002), in which Julianne Moore comes to terms with her closeted gay husband (Dennis Quaid). "I thought it would be a sort of Douglas Sirk extravaganza. And then he started to show us his research material. Films, photographs, the playlist that he gave Rooney and I... it was really exciting. And I thought, 'This is so far outside what I thought it could be.'"

Says Mara, "A lot of the research was done for us. Phyllis wrote a great script, and I also had the book, which is an incredible thing to have. There's so much in there, because the book is told from Therese's point of view. And Todd had sent about four or five CDs of songs to

listen to, he gave me all these movies to watch, and a book of images, things that had inspired him and would help explain what the film would look and feel like."

Together, the two women fleshed out their parts with research of their own. "I read a lot of outsider erotic fiction," says Blanchett, "and we did a huge timeline, Todd, Rooney and I, of what was going on politically, from the end of the Second World War until the '60s, so we'd know what world these women existed within."

FOR ALL ITS ARTISTIC AND technical merit, however, *Carol* came to Cannes with a frisson of prurience. *Brokeback Mountain* is a good reference point here: like Ang Lee's movie, a love scene is not only

Tea and sympathy:
Cate Blanchett and
Rooney Mara break
boundaries.

crucial to the plot, it's what everyone, whether consciously or not, is braced for. Says Haynes, "It's a narrative component. It's not gratuitous, it's not salacious or titillating for no reason. In this film, my God, it's the thing you are anticipating most — wondering how it will ever happen and what will bring us to that point. So it's essential. But *still* everybody was nervous about it. Then you shoot it and it's over before you know it. Like getting a vaccine jab."

Blanchett welcomed that challenge. "I suppose where I relate to Todd is that..." She pauses. "Well, of course, I have boundaries, moral boundaries, but I don't find *labels* particularly useful. So I don't draw social or gender lines in the sand about things."

Mara waves away any suggestion that the film is controversial or confrontational. "It's not scandalous to me," she says. "I understand that it will be to many people, and I understand that I live in a bubble that's not normal. I'm so surrounded by progressive, forward-thinking people that, for me, I think, do these issues still even exist? It's not racy to me. It's like any other love story."

Blanchett was even less fazed, suggesting at the film's press conference that the sex scene was "hilarious". "I didn't mean it's hilarious in the end product," she says carefully, "but when you've got to kiss someone's nipples that you don't really know very well..." She laughs. "You've got to have a bit of a sense of humour! I loved working with Rooney. We have the same kind of practicality and gusto, in terms of our approach to the work, and I think we're both pretty unshockable. So it was great to do that scene with her."

"But it's still a scene," she emphasises, "and Todd was very clear about how we were going to shoot it. You don't want to feel that it's gratuitous, or that it's going to be alienating for an audience. Like all good physical scenes, you have to feel like you're inside the characters' heads, not just physically watching them."

So why is Highsmith's story still making headlines, 53 years down the line? Why is sex, of any kind, still taboo? "People *talk* about sex all the time," says Blanchett, "but deep down they're afraid of intimacy. It takes time, it takes effort, and you have to give over control, so the idea of being ambushed and giving in to the kind of volcanic love this story describes — whether you're gay, lesbian, transsexual, heterosexual — well, it's a dangerous concept for a lot of people." ■

CAROL IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 27
AND IS REVIEWED ON PAGE 46.

The DIRECTORS

A trio of helmers who've earned the hype

GEORGE MILLER

He took Hollywood to school with
Mad Max: Fury Road

→ NOW THE DUST HAS SETTLED ON *MAD Max: Fury Road*, the enormity of George Miller's achievement is easier to comprehend. At the age of 70, a director whose last film was *Happy Feet Two* rediscovered his inner badass, returning to the franchise that made his name with the energy of someone half his age. Shot over 120 days in the heat of the Namibian desert, with dozens of jaw-dropping stunts in-camera, this is a movie whose production was as crazed as its characters.

"I should probably own up to being insane,"

laughs Miller, looking anything but in a black leather jacket and jumper. "Plenty of people keep telling me that I am. Particularly my family."

Madness may course through *Fury Road*, but it was composed meticulously. Having spent a decade storyboarding it, Miller and his wife Margaret Sixel, also his editor, then devised a system where the action would be constantly placed in the centre of the frame, making it easier to follow. "With a movie like this, which is getting towards 3,000 shots, you have to be assiduous about eye scan, otherwise it just becomes visual noise," explains Miller, who tweaked virtually every shot in post. Some he slowed down. Others he speeded up. "I think there might have been two insert shots somewhere that in some way

weren't manipulated," he says.

Fury Road is "not the kind of movie that is usually noticed by the Academy," Miller avers, but the reactions of his peers suggest otherwise. Edgar Wright was one of the early cheerleaders. Guillermo del Toro is a huge fan. Rian Johnson tweeted, "George Miller just took us all to school." "I've never had that kind of response before," says Miller. "To have some of the world's great filmmakers genuinely enthusing about the film has been, I must confess, very gratifying. Though, to be honest, I'm just relieved we got through the movie!" CHRIS HEWITT

MAD MAX: FURY ROAD IS OUT NOW ON BLU-RAY, DVD, TO STREAM AND TO DOWNLOAD.



DAVID O. RUSSELL

Darlings of the Academy Russell and J-Law return with third outing *Joy*

→ "YOU GOTTA BE RELENTLESS." David O. Russell is nearly done with *Joy* and his voice carries a marathon runner's mixture of exhaustion and elation. "It's not a sprint, making a movie!"

His third film with Jennifer Lawrence, following her Oscar-nominated turn in *American Hustle* and winning performance in *Silver Linings Playbook*, is their most ambitious collaboration yet. More than a marathon. "It's like climbing a mountain," says the 57 year-old writer/director. "Jennifer plays a woman across three to four decades, so there are moments that were challenging. It's an intense combination of vulnerability, emotion, passion and ambition."

Originally the film was a biopic of Miracle Mop inventor Joy Mangano, a working mum who made a fortune, but now Russell regards it as only "based partly on truth", with the story evolving into a broader tale, inspired as much by other women in Russell's life, including his mother. "It's also about the *emotion* joy," he says. "You can't have joy without

grit and sacrifice. In the case of this character, it helps in childhood and in facing the world if you manage to keep that alive."

Other Russell alumni Robert De Niro and Bradley Cooper also return, but familiarity hasn't bred complacency. "I think you have to have a healthy fear of your actors," says Russell with a laugh. "Which is a form of respect! You want to be careful and you want to cherish the relationship." Having also directed Christian Bale to an Oscar, in *The Fighter*, and been nominated for Best Director three times, Russell could be said to have evolved from indie maverick to Academy darling, but he takes nothing for granted. "You can't make the mistake of thinking it's any different than it was the first time. It's always hard. Nothing changes that. Never be fooled by any attention you've gotten!" **NEV PIERCE**

JOY IS OUT ON JANUARY 1, 2016, AND WILL BE REVIEWED IN A FUTURE ISSUE.



TOM McCARTHY

From Adam Sandler flop *The Cobbler* to Awards front-runner *Spotlight*

→ REDEMPTION CAME FAST FOR Tom McCarthy. The writer/director had an unblemished record prior to this summer's *The Cobbler*, an Adam Sandler-starring fairy tale that sank fast. It was disappointing for the director of *The Station Agent* and *The Visitor*, also an Oscar-nominee for his writing on Pixar's *Up*. But mere months later comes his greatest triumph yet: *Spotlight*, the incredible story of how *The Boston Globe* exposed the Catholic Church's cover-up of paedophile priests.

It almost didn't happen. "I don't think Hollywood was rushing to tell [this story]," McCarthy says. "The risk of movies like this is so great." McCarthy himself baulked when first offered the project, though that was because he was busy on another assignment. It was only when he and co-writer Josh Singer met the reporters responsible that he became hooked. "I had an ensemble vision. I thought, 'Let's approach it in a way that honoured the reporters' work: straightforward, hard-hitting and unsensationalised.'"

It helped that McCarthy, an actor himself, could take the script straight to friends who happened to be big names. He emailed Mark Ruffalo, offering the role of passionate investigator Mike Rezendes, and received an enthusiastic, 'Yes!' overnight. More character-actors followed: Liev Schreiber, John Slattery, Stanley Tucci. Michael Keaton had emailed McCarthy some kind words after *The Visitor*, and received the role of *Spotlight* team boss Walter 'Robby' Robinson. "Everyone was the real deal," McCarthy says of his cast.

With acclaim from the Venice and Toronto festivals, this thoughtful and balanced exposé drama could follow in the footsteps of *All The President's Men*. "You want your film to connect, but this is also about a few important things," McCarthy insists. "About journalism, and a particular kind of abuse. I'm excited for people to see it." **HELEN O'HARA**

SPOTLIGHT IS OUT JANUARY 29, 2016, AND WILL BE REVIEWED IN A FUTURE ISSUE.



Johnny ROTTEN



Depp discovers his “dangerous side” in *Black Mass*, the true-life gangster thriller that may just mug the Oscars this year...

WORDS OLLY RICHARDS





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WHITEY BULGER. IF YOU'RE unfamiliar, it's not a name that naturally inspires fear. Come on: it sounds like a particularly pronounced zit. To many Americans, though, especially those in South Boston, James 'Whitey' Bulger is a name to be whispered, belonging as it does to one of the most notorious crime bosses to ever stalk their streets.

Johnny Depp, however, is not looking especially fearsome today. Arriving at the Venice Film Festival dressed in bright yellow trousers, green blazer and round sunglasses, he appears to have taken on the part of someone's eccentric uncle who possibly owns an ancient motorbike and also a magic shop. He is here to premier *Black Mass*, the crime thriller which dramatises Bulger's reign and in which he stars as the notorious mobster. In the film, Depp is — and this sentence is possibly becoming redundant in discussing his roles — unrecognisable. And couldn't provide a sharper contrast to the 'eccentric uncle' look he's settled on today.

As Bulger, his jet eyes become a piercing, otherworldly blue. His hair retreats almost entirely from his head, leaving just a sad, thin halo. His teeth look like an old fence that's received a savage kicking. A new Depp face is par for the course in almost all his roles, but this time it is not for comic effect.

"It was very important to look as much like James Bulger as possible," says Depp. "My eyes are as black as the ace of spades so there were blue contacts that were hand-painted because they needed to be piercing. They needed to cut right through you."

Depp wanted Bulger to be a man who you always knew was watching, though you never knew why. "Bulger was complicated," he says with considerable understatement. "He'd take an old lady's groceries in for her and then ten minutes later he might be bashing in somebody's skull." ▶

DURING THE 1970S AND '80S, Bulger was the biggest crime boss in Boston, either carrying out or ordering the murders of at least 11 people. Depending on who you believe, he was also an FBI informant, for childhood friend and Bureau golden boy John Connolly. Leads he passed on meant Bulger's own misdeeds went unchecked. When his luck eventually turned, Bulger went on the run for 16 years and was for a time only kept from pole position on the FBI's Most Wanted List by Osama bin Laden. That last fact alone is probably a large part of why Bulger had to, eventually, become the subject of a movie.

"He sounds like the creation of Mario Puzo or one of those other great writers who chronicle gangsters," says Scott Cooper, the director bringing Bulger to life after an earlier attempt with Barry Levinson stalled. "Here you have this man who is the greatest crime figure in South Boston, his brother was the most powerful politician in the city, and his childhood friend is ascending the ranks of the FBI. It was an intoxicating combination." Intoxicating, yes, but when you enter the gangster genre you immediately position yourself against some of history's most lauded filmmakers.

"I went in with great trepidation," says Cooper. "Some of the greatest films made in America and indeed other parts of the world are gangster films. Coppola, Scorsese... The bar is extremely high. You can really only fail. I remember thinking to myself, 'My God, why would you present yourself [with] so many high hurdles?' Scorsese even made a very great film about the subject, albeit fictional, with *The Departed* (Jack Nicholson's character was based on Bulger). Scorsese! But it just was too riveting a narrative to pass up."

Black Mass also offered Cooper the opportunity to work with Depp, an actor with whom he'd wanted to collaborate since his first film, *Crazy Heart*, won Jeff Bridges an Oscar in 2010. Cooper says he only ever writes his leading roles with a particular actor in mind, although on *Black Mass* it happened to be the same person Levinson had been thinking of.

"I don't come on to projects with actors already attached," Cooper says, "but it was a genius stroke of casting. Johnny Depp's a national treasure and a remarkable performer, and the reason I wanted Johnny was because I wanted to see him in a way we'd never seen him. I'd never seen a dangerous side to him that I knew we needed to get."

When Depp is asked why he chose to disappear behind this remarkably different face, the latest in a long line of



"Bulger would take an old lady's groceries in, then be bashing in somebody's skull."

JOHNNY DEPP



extreme makeovers, he gives a melancholy sigh and plays with his beer bottle (whose contents, he swears, are non-alcoholic).

"I'm not sure I ever decided to become an actor," he says in his unhurried drawl. "I didn't really care, because I was a musician and then when I got into the racket I was stuck in a TV series (*21 Jump Street*) that was — not to bite the hand that fed me; it put me on the map — very frustrating, because you realise you end up saying more of someone else's words in the span of one year than you end up saying your own. Especially when they're badly written words. My heroes have always been people like John Barrymore, Lon Chaney Sr., Marlon Brando... All these were guys who *transform*. So I suppose it was just from a want to be a character actor, rather than just a poster boy that they tried to make me about 100 years ago. I think an actor has some degree of responsibility to the audience to change, to give them something new each time... You have to surprise them and not bore them by just being the same thing every time and playing yourself. So I find,



I don't know, safety and also danger in trying to do these transformations."

There is an argument that Depp was due a change, if not in the sense he means it; that his transformations have become a schtick. The Depp gallery of grotesques is now so crowded that to see him hollow-eyed and moon-pale, once so surprising in films like *Edward Scissorhands*, is mundane. Yet this is different. It is agreed that *Black Mass*, despite receiving mixed reviews in Venice, Telluride and Toronto's film festivals, has given Depp his most interesting role in years, proof that after years beneath the greasepaint he is still the actor he was before he became a star. Bulger is the Depp we've wanted back for a long time. It might even win him an Oscar.

I'M NOT REALLY ONE FOR getting overexcited," says Joel Edgerton. "But I was punching the air when I knew I'd be working with Johnny Depp. I have a photo of myself at some wedding when I was 14 or 15, and I swear to God I'm trying to

Left: Director Scott Cooper teases out Joel Edgerton's dodgy dealer side. **Above:** Johnny Depp's Whitey Bulger in cahoots with Edgerton's corrupt FBI agent John Connolly. **Top right:** Funny how? Cooper (in the hat) lays down the law between takes. **Above right:** Three stooges? Adam Scott as Agent Robert Fitzpatrick, Kevin Bacon as FBI boss Charles McGuire and David Harbour as Connolly ally John Morris.



be his character from *21 Jump Street*. My hair doesn't naturally go up in the air, but I made it."

If anyone is glad to see Depp back in a meaty role, it's Edgerton, who plays John Connolly, Bulger's FBI connection. When he started acting, Edgerton had a list of three actors he wanted to work with: Christian Bale, Leonardo DiCaprio and Depp. "The idea of jousting with him on screen? Man, that was exciting."

That joust is actually a pretty evenly matched contest. *Black Mass* proves just as much a showcase for Edgerton as Depp. Edgerton's always been a strong actor, from 2010's *Animal Kingdom* through *Warrior* to this year's directorial debut *The Gift*, but this role is a genuine reason to see the film, not just a happy bonus. He subtly takes Connolly on a descent from a man who wants to impress the guy he idolised as a boy to one who slips too far into trying to become him. It is he who illustrates what it is to be seduced by evil.

"It's important that you're not celebrating or glorifying [that gangster

life]," says Edgerton. "The risk is that you take a character like Whitey, who's like this gangster boogeyman who recedes into the shadows — he's like a very dangerous Where's Wally? — and over the passage of time you could allow his swagger to become a celebration of who he is. That would be real a shame because there are a lot of people around today whose families are fucked because of him."

Even if *Black Mass* isn't remembered among the greatest gangster films, it should be remembered for one of the great gangster performances. It's done just what Cooper said he wanted: it's shown the darker side of Johnny Depp, and it is seductive. Inside the clown prince of cinema there is something cruel, something gracefully evil, and it should be let out to play more.

Putting down his bottle, Depp offers a mean grin. "Oh, I found the evil in myself a long time ago," he says. "We're old friends."

BLACK MASS IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 27 AND IS REVIEWED ON PAGE 50.

THE DANISH GIRL





Under The SKIN



Empire meets *The Danish Girl* — both of them, in fact: **Alicia Vikander** and **Eddie Redmayne**, the pair at the heart of a film that's attracting as much controversy as it is awards buzz

WORDS HELEN O'HARA

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LAST FEBRUARY, EDDIE REDMAYNE flew to Los Angeles for the weekend. Turns out he had an Academy Award to pick up, for playing Stephen Hawking in *The Theory Of Everything*. But he couldn't hang around, or even fully absorb the experience. He was two weeks into shooting a film. "The Oscars happened on the Sunday, and I came straight from Heathrow to do a scene where I was lying naked being X-rayed," laughs Redmayne. "It was with a cracking hangover, so I couldn't really process the whole thing. I was just focused on trying to tell the story."

The story which so distracted the Oscar-winner from his freshly minted statuette, and may yet put him in line for another, was that of two extraordinary women: Lili Elbe (Redmayne) and Gerda Wegener (Alicia Vikander), subjects of Tom Hooper's *The Danish Girl*. Lili was christened Einar Wegener and spent her early life living as a man, a celebrated landscape painter, before becoming the first person ever to undergo gender confirmation surgery in 1930. This was

a time when the term 'transgender' didn't even exist; the film shows Lili being dismissed as a schizophrenic or the victim of hormonal imbalance before she finds help. Gerda, meanwhile, was Lili's artist wife, who in a way went through her own transformation when her husband began the transition to living as a woman.

REDMAYNE AND VIKANDER shared a research-intensive approach to their roles. Both read David Ebershoff's book, *The Danish Girl*, and Lili's originally published diaries, *Man Into Woman*. "It was amazing to see how expressive and forward Lili and Gerda were," says Vikander. "Gerda seemed like an extremely liberal woman." She and Redmayne examined their characters' paintings, with Redmayne making use of his degree in art history to help recreate Lili-as-Einar's paintings and Vikander loudly protesting her inability to draw before doing just that as Gerda. More importantly, they met with transgender women and men and their partners.

Love in a cold climate: Gerda Wegener (Alicia Vikander) stands by her partner Lili Elbe (Eddie Redmayne).

"Even though this story is set in a time when there were no references for what those women go through together, we knew that we had to find people from that background," explains Vikander. "We both met a lot of people from the trans community, and of course I had conversations with people whose partners had gone through what Lili did. They all wanted to point out that people forget that they went through a transition along with the person they loved. That was really the essence of Gerda's story."

The strangeness of Gerda's situation was that, even as she supported her partner through a process that no-one else seemed to understand, she entered a period of artistic success — with Lili as her muse. "Gerda had this idea of Lili that comes through her art," says Vikander. "She saw something in Lili before she could vocalise it herself."

Hooper says that what made the story so exciting to him was the way Gerda's art "makes the emergence of Lili possible, to some extent. It was probably how they could afford Lili's operation. To



"The film is an expression of unconditional love and where it can lead."

TOM HOOPER



me Gerda is a bit of a feminist icon. She's saying, 'I have a right to be a professional artist, to be driven and ambitious.'

To bring Lili to life, Redmayne worked with movement choreographer Alex Reynolds, who had assisted his performance as Hawking in *The Theory Of Everything*. As he did during that shoot, Redmayne had to keep careful track of his character's transformation – though it was, he insists, achieved in "a very different way", performance-wise. He requested to see all the rushes. "It was about making sure there was a clear line. I met many trans women and they would describe a period of pushing too far when first transitioning. Some described it as hyper-feminisation. So you couldn't make a mistake. I worked with Alex and we tried to map that out."

Providing another parallel with *Theory*, *The Danish Girl* is also the story of an exceptional marriage put under great pressure. "They're extraordinary women," says Redmayne of both Gerda and *Theory*'s Jane Hawking (Felicity Jones). Though he denies that the

similarities between the two films reveal anything about his own preoccupations. "I got cast in *The Danish Girl* whilst doing *Les Mis* (also directed by Hooper), which was the first part I'd ever been straight-up offered. For *The Theory Of Everything* I was at the bottom of the list and I was just trying to get a job. Maybe in a few years, if I'm lucky enough to choose some parts, then we can go back and psychoanalyse my marriage issues."

Hooper had thought about Redmayne for the role when he first read the script in 2008. "We'd worked together on a mini-series, *Elizabeth The First*, when Eddie was a kid, really. I remember thinking then that I'd like to do a film with him as the absolute lead."

Vikander came into the frame later, after Hooper was given an early look at *Ex Machina*, in which she plays seductive AI Ava. "That was real edge-of-my-seat cinemagoing," says Hooper. "I chose Alicia because she has such a big heart. The centre of this story is this journey that's made possible not just because Lili herself is so radical in

embarking on it at this time, but also her wife is so radical in supporting her. The film is an expression of unconditional love and where it leads when one partner wants to change."

"I had heard about this film for a long time, it's been around trying to get made for 12 years," says Vikander. "When they announced that Eddie and Tom were going to do it, I thought, 'I'm really looking forward to seeing that.' Then my agents called and said there was a second very good female role."

From the first time Redmayne and Vikander read together, it was clear that Hooper was onto something special. "I'll never forget, she came into the audition and I was behind the camera reading," says Redmayne. "I got to the end of the scene and I was waiting for Tom to go, 'Cut.' I looked and he was in tears. Alicia is just formidable. She really raised my game and challenged me."

DESPITE LARGELY POSITIVE reactions, *The Danish Girl* itself has been challenged, drawing criticism for casting a cisgender actor as Lili, and for ignoring claims that Gerda was a lesbian. "We commissioned the best primary research we could, and there's certainly some evidence of that but it's not conclusive," says Hooper. "I know Eddie couldn't have been more sincere and conscientious in his desire to get it right. Is access of trans actors to parts as easy as that of cisgender actors? I don't think it is. I think the industry has to create more opportunities for trans actors, not just to trans roles but to cisgender roles."

Last year, a *Time* magazine cover asked if we had reached "the transgender tipping point" as TV shows like *Orange Is The New Black* and *Transparent* shone a light on the appalling prejudice that trans people face. "When I started, this was perceived to be a film that would be very hard to get made," says Hooper. "I find it amusing that people now see it as quite an obvious film to have done! It's a wonderful sign that the Western world has moved on."

"I think all of us who were on it thought it was a very important story to tell," says Vikander, "so to be part of shedding light on this story was something that was in my heart."

"The whole process has been the most formidable education," adds Redmayne. "This is a love story and it's beyond gender."

THE DANISH GIRL IS OUT ON JANUARY 1, 2016, AND WILL BE REVIEWED IN A FUTURE ISSUE.

BRYAN CRANSTON

On tackling *Trumbo*, his biggest role since *Breaking Bad*

→ THERE IS A WONDERFULLY tragicomic scene in Bryan Cranston's new film which sees him, as blacklisted screenwriter Dalton Trumbo, sitting opposite Alan Tudyk, playing his friend Ian McLellan Hunter, as the pair regard an Oscar on the table between them. It's been awarded to Hunter for writing *Roman Holiday*, but he wants Trumbo to take it because it was Trumbo who *really* wrote that script, though as a communist he's barred from working in Hollywood. But Trumbo resists. "He actually threw it in a bottom drawer," says Cranston. "Until you can have your own name on your own work, it's worthless."

That was the tragedy of the anti-communist campaign of the late '40s and '50s, which saw hundreds of artists rendered *persona non gratae*. Trumbo was one of the more flamboyant figures targeted who, like a less murderous Walter White, resorted to desperate measures to see his family through.

It didn't take much to convince the *Breaking Bad* star to play him. "I saw videotape of this character, and boy!" he exclaims. "With the cigarette holder, all the pontification, he's this wacky, idiosyncratic raconteur. He was bombastic and self-abusive; he was constantly poking and jabbing. He irritated people."

Thanks, Cranston says, to Jay Roach's "insightful" direction and conversations with Trumbo's daughters, he gives a complex, often hilarious performance as this contradictory figure, whose moment of glory came with *Spartacus*. Reaction so far suggests Cranston could soon be sitting down again to stare at a statuette, this one with the correct name on it. "Oh, who knows?" he demurs, refusing to be drawn. Even so, it's not hard to imagine that award-refusal scene being replayed, with brilliant irony, in the Dolby Theatre come Oscar night. **HELEN O'HARA**

TRUMBO IS OUT FEBRUARY 5, 2016, AND WILL BE REVIEWED IN A FUTURE ISSUE.



The ACTORS

Supporting or lead, there's gold in them thar performances

TOM HIDDLESTON

Showing a whole new side in *I Saw The Light*

→ DIRECTOR MARC ABRAHAM first laid eyes on Tom Hiddleston back in 2011, at the premiere for *War Horse*. “That guy looks like Hank Williams,” he whispered to his wife. “Can we go to *one movie*,” she replied, “without you talking about Hank Williams?” Nearly four years later, the fruit of Abraham’s obsession with the womanising, hard-drinking hillbilly bard of country music is finally complete. And at its core is a remarkable performance by, yes, Tom Hiddleston, an unlikely ringer for the late star.

“I knew it was a challenge,” says the London-born actor, “but it was the best kind. I’m always excited by foreign territory. And Hank was a firework. He was a wild man. He was uncontrollable. So he fell victim to all the temptations of fame.”

To prepare for the part, Hiddleston went to live with the film’s musical director, Rodney Crowell, for five weeks in his Tennessee home. “Within a day Rodney said, ‘I got this gig comin’ up. I figure you might wanna see what it’s like.’ I just thought I was going to be a fly on the

wall, but just before we went out there he said, ‘How ‘bout we get you on that stage?’”

The ‘gig’ turned out to be the Wheatland Music Festival, where Hiddleston sang Williams’ song *Move It On Over* for a crowd of 10,000. “It was honestly the most extraordinary feeling. I don’t think I particularly sounded like Hank then, but the thrill of playing that song for that many people was amazing.” It turned out to be easier than playing the man. “In all the research I did, it felt like there was an unknowable quality at the centre of him,” says Hiddleston.

The result seems likely to keep the actor on his toes during awards season, which he must juggle with “chasing King Kong” as he shoots *Kong: Skull Island*. Abraham, of course, is delighted. “When I chose him, every one of my friends was like, ‘Who’s Tom Hiddleston?’” he laughs. “The big joke now is they all go, ‘Hey, how’d ya get Tom Hiddleston?’” DAMON WISE

I SAW THE LIGHT IS OUT ON FEBRUARY 5, 2016, AND WILL BE REVIEWED IN A FUTURE ISSUE.



MARK RYLANCE

The theatre legend who dominates Spielberg’s *Bridge Of Spies*

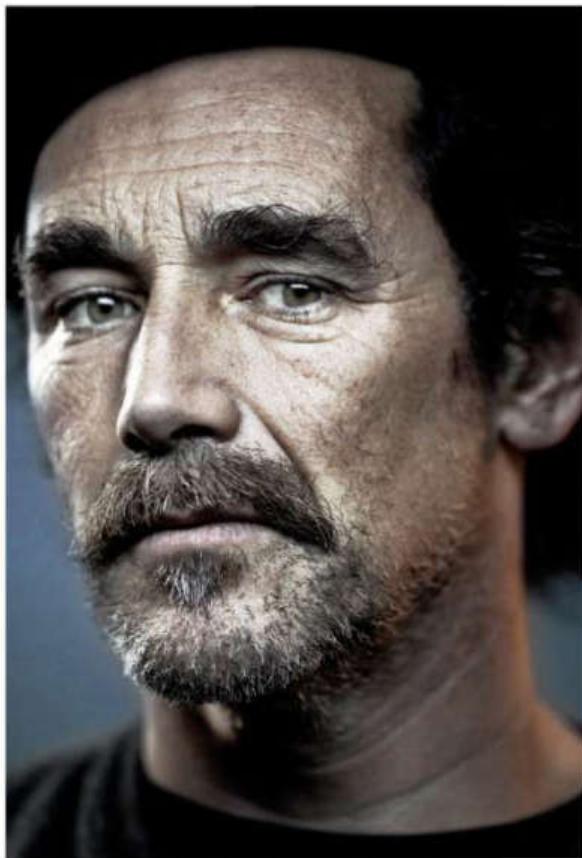
→ “I WAS VERY NERVOUS,” SAYS Mark Rylance about working with *Bridge Of Spies* director Steven Spielberg. “Just look at what he’s done. It would be like joining Arsenal or Man United as a young player who’s only played in League One.” Yet, as Rudolf Abel, the Russian put on trial for spying, Rylance gives a subtle, exquisitely detailed turn with a killer monologue that puts him at the heart of any Best Supporting Actor conversation.

Bridge Of Spies is not the actor’s first encounter with Spielberg, having turned down a small role in 1987’s *Empire Of The Sun*. “I think my agent gradually gave up on me after that.” A titan of theatre (three Tonys, two Oliviers), and more recently acclaimed for his astonishing performance as Thomas Cromwell in the BBC’s *Wolf Hall*, Rylance has proved a reluctant film actor. “Partly because I turned away from it again and again,” he says, “partly because I was too expressive. I got better as an actor.” After getting down to the last three for the lead in the Coen

brothers’ *A Serious Man*, he made a concerted effort to consider more movie work. Though his next role was in Jason Statham bomb *Blitz*, in 2011. “It was a shitty idea,” admits Rylance. “It was shit to make and I thought, ‘What am I doing? I wanted to work with the Coen brothers.’”

Bridge Of Spies means he finally did get to work with the Coens, in a sense — they have a writing credit for giving Matt Charman’s script a polish — and he’s reuniting with Spielberg to play the title character in next year’s Roald Dahl adaptation *The BFG*. “It’s like watching Picasso with his paintbrush,” he says of Spielberg directing child actor Ruby Barnhill. But it’s not like he’s now thrown himself into movie-work. “If someone wants me, I’ll consider it. But I’m not going to be reading scripts or putting myself up for stuff. That’s how things have panned out for me and I’m happy about it.” IAN FREER

BRIDGE OF SPIES IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 27 AND IS REVIEWED ON PAGE 48.



STEVE JOBS





JOBS

The Book Of



Tech origin story. Family drama. Study of a genius. Monster movie. Call **Aaron Sorkin** and **Danny Boyle's** awards-tipped film what you will, just don't use the B-word

WORDS PHIL DE SEMLYEN

THIS IS NOT A BIOPIC," stresses Danny Boyle, director of *Steve Jobs*. "That's one of the misconceptions about this movie."

Expect no eureka moments of a young Steve messing about with circuit boards; no jubilant unveiling of that half-munched Apple logo; no bedside vigils in the last weeks of his life. "I didn't know what I wanted to do," recalls writer Aaron Sorkin. "I just knew I didn't want to do that. The cradle-to-grave

structure is tired and over-familiar."

With apologies to Sorkin, *Jobs*' was a life less ordinary. Viz., cradle: born 1955, adopted by Paul and Clara Jobs. Founded Apple in 1976. Forced out in 1985. Funded Pixar. Returned to Apple in 1997. Fired people. Turned it into a \$300 billion company. Reconciled with daughter. Grave: died of complications relating to pancreatic cancer on October 5, 2011. Grieved by millions. No, a polite biopic wouldn't cut it. Sorkin's task was to reinvent the click wheel entirely. >



I SPENT A COUPLE OF MONTHS just pacing around and banging my head against the wall," says Sorkin on those early structure-grappling days. Jobs had died before powerhouse producer Scott Rudin's initial approach with the idea, but Sorkin organised meetings with those in the former Apple CEO's inner circle. Like Walter Isaacson, whose 2011 Jobs biography lent him much raw material, they poured out their memories of the man, good, bad and occasionally monstrous, until inspiration struck. "I found these points of friction that Steve had with the people in his life," remembers Sorkin, "and I thought, 'What if all those were dramatised backstage before three different product launches?' I didn't think in a million years that the studio would allow me to do it..."

To his surprise, both Rudin and Sony Pictures, the project's home at the time, loved the idea. What the man behind *The Social Network* and *The West Wing* had proposed was something more theatrical than cinematic. Heavy on exposition,

with events unfolding in dressing rooms and antechambers, Sorkin placed Jobs in a setting more familiar to Broadway than Burbank. "I'm a playwright that kind of pretends to be a screenwriter and tries to get away with it," he says.

Sorkin zeroed in on a 14-year period when the white heat of Jobs' drive and ambition burned with an extra imperative: survival. Opening in 1984 with the launch of the Mac, Jobs is soon exiled by Apple CEO John Sculley. Act two offers the closest thing to the biopic staple, the comeback, with the launch of Jobs' \$6,500 NeXT computer. Finally, there's the triumphant return to the company he'd created with Steve 'Woz' Wozniak, and the introduction of the iMac to a by-now expectant world.

For Sorkin there was drama to burn in the tight-wire tension of those pre-presentation clashes with Wozniak, his marketing chief Joanna Hoffman, and anyone else who happened to be in the area. Jobs the businessman, formidable of conviction and temper,

Seth Rogen as Jobs' business partner and fellow tech genius, Steve Wozniak.





Steve Jobs (Michael Fassbender) launches the iMac. Life will never be the same.



Danny Boyle consults his star. Possibly on the art of origami.

came quickly on the page. Much harder was getting under the skin of Jobs the father, a key subplot Sorkin wanted to weave into his three acts. Jobs' infamous 'reality distortion field', a knack for bending his worldview to his interests, saw his daughter, Lisa Brennan-Jobs, exiled from his affections for years. To Sorkin, it seemed an unforgivable betrayal. "I didn't know how I'd be able to care that he'd done all these fantastic things when he did the most important thing he was supposed to do poorly," he recalls.

A meeting with Brennan-Jobs, now 37, helped address those concerns. She offered up stories even Isaacson had been denied. "That was the most influential part of the research," Sorkin stresses. Many of those memories, including tales of the lengths her father had gone to deny his paternity of her, cast Jobs in a deeply unflattering light. "But Lisa told them in such a kind way and at the end of the story she'd say, 'But you can tell he really loved me because...' So I decided to write a movie that rewards patience."

PATIENCE WAS A KEY THEME of the project. There was an early flirtation with David Fincher, Sorkin's collaborator on *The Social Network*, who then clocked off in a heated flurry of leaked emails with Rudin and studio head Amy Pascal. Then came a switch of studios from Sony to Universal, when the former put the film in turnaround. By this time, the script had arrived in Danny Boyle's inbox. The British director offered a key ingredient. "Steve Jobs required a director who has fantastic visual gifts, as Danny does, to make this play into a movie," Sorkin stresses.

For Boyle, it was a straightforward decision, even if he found himself peppered with questions about his supposed predecessor on the project. "A lot of people said, 'Were you honoured to be stepping into [Fincher's] shoes?' I was! I don't know what went on with them or why they fell out," he recalls, "but I was very happy to be involved."

Far from shaking off the inevitable



comparisons, Boyle embraced *The Social Network*. “Everyone told me *not* to watch it,” he remembers, “and to watch *The West Wing* instead. But it’s an extraordinary film, very honest to its subject matter and yet exhilarating to watch. A lot of it is *sitting down*. When did that last happen in a film? So that was liberating because ours is about movement. I said to myself, ‘I see, this is a standing up movie.’ And it literally is. It helped me feel confident about it. This is another film that goes behind the data, but it’s different.”

For the man whose Olympics opening ceremony spanned the industrial and information ages in a flurry of towering chimneys, SMS-athons and Kenneth Branagh in a big hat, the material held obvious appeal. “It’s the modern world, isn’t it?” enthuses Boyle. “We shot in Jobs’ real garage and called it ‘Bethlehem’, because it was the cradle of the information age. These companies — Apple, Google, Facebook, Uber — are bewitching us and shaping our world more than any other

“The man who made such perfect products was himself poorly made.”

DANNY BOYLE

forces, even more than politicians. But what are the costs of that?”

To some degree, he sees *Steve Jobs* as a cautionary tale. “There’s a huge element of that. In many ways, the man who made such perfect products is himself poorly made.” If Boyle had had his way, the film’s title would have reflected the glitches in Jobs’ own coding directly. “I asked Rudin and Sorkin if we could call it *King Of France*,” he chuckles. “People used to call Jobs that behind his back because he behaved like [Louis XIV].”

GRANTED THE KEYS TO the kingdom, Boyle needed a king. Christian Bale and Leonardo DiCaprio had both been linked with the role, but the director had his sights set elsewhere. “Fincher had lined up Bale, but when the dust settled, I wanted Michael (Fassbender).” Boyle had in mind Fassbender’s small but memorable turn in *Inglourious Basterds*, keen to give a hint of humour to a man known for his waspish intensity. “He won’t thank me for saying this, but there’s a bit of Cary Grant in Michael, so that’s how I sold him to the studio. I said, ‘Listen, you’re going to get all that extraordinary power that you’ve seen in *Hunger* — not that the studio heads had seen *Hunger*, but they had seen *12 Years A Slave* and *X-Men* — and you’re going to get that touch of the Cary Grants Tarantino teased out of him.’”

Those negotiations, so common in the Hollywood pre-production process, soon spilled into the public domain. On November 24, 2014, hackers, reputedly



from North Korea, "firebombed" Sony Pictures in a cyber heist that saw private studio emails tipped wholesale onto the web. One leaked memo, sent to then-Sony boss Amy Pascal, saw Sorkin questioning Boyle's choice of lead. "I don't know who Michael Fassbender is and the rest of the world isn't going to care," sniffed the writer. "This is insane." It was a throwaway sentiment he'd come to rue. "The last thing you want is the actor playing Steve Jobs to not be confident in the rehearsal room, so I obviously had to have a talk with Michael," he tells *Empire*. "I told him that at the time I wrote that email I hadn't seen nearly enough of his work. Now I can't imagine anyone else playing the part."

This Jobs was never designed to be a direct facsimile of the man himself. If he had been, Ashton Kutcher might have been offered another crack at the role. Unlike Kutcher — a virtual doppelgänger who essayed him in 2013's *Jobs* — Fassbender, as he readily admits, looks "nothing" like him. "That's certainly true in the first act," says the actor, "but by the end of the

film, we'd come to something that was as close as it was going to be, and hopefully it'll just have happened for the audience by the third act." The resemblance needed to be gestural rather than slavish, stresses Boyle. "I've done this before in *127 Hours* because (James) Franco looked nothing like Aron Ralston, but what's weird is that in some weird osmosis way, they do end up looking like the character in the end."

In the Fassbender toolkit was Jobs' trademark garb of Levi's 501s, Issey Miyake turtleneck and New Balance sneakers. "They're nice, comfy runners," laughs Fassbender of those much-derided Jobs pumps (they were even the butt of a Ryan Gosling joke in *Crazy Stupid Love*). "He had this mythical uniform, but maybe it was just about removing one decision in the morning, because he had millions of more important decisions to make." Key, though, was the script. "It's the best modern script I've read," says Fassbender. "There's a rhythm to the way Sorkin writes, it's like music."

Left: Boyle talks script with legendary screenwriter Aaron Sorkin. **Above:** Kate Winslet as Jobs' protective colleague, Joanna Hoffman. **Above:** Jobs reflects.

The dialogue-heavy, three-part screenplay did place a heavy burden on the actor and he had less than two months to master it before rehearsals started in January. Instead of Christmas turkey and carols, there were long hours immersed in Sorkin's words, and walks listening to old Jobs interviews. "I'd play them on a loop just to hear the man's voice, then I'd mull over certain personality traits," explains Fassbender. "Ultimately, it's that classic thing of, 'Just learn the lines, darling.' You have all this information and it seems overwhelming but then you start getting into it and picking away at it. There were so many lines to learn and I'm a slow learner of lines, so it frustrates me. Friends of mine are like, 'Oh, I'll look at it a couple of times and it's in there.' Seth Rogen (*Steve Wozniak in the film*) is one of those. Unfortunately, I don't have that gift."

Of course, Fassbender's other gifts are pronounced. Already tipped for his first lead actor Oscar nod, his *Jobs* is by turns scary, charming and messianic. "He's very well cast as Magneto," reflects Boyle, "because he's magnetic, my God. And he needs to be in this, and more — and thank God he is." This *Steve Jobs* is a force of nature who defies you to look away.

"I was just nervous that I'd keep up my end of the bargain," says a very relaxed-sounding Fassbender. "He's such an important person in our time, so it's a big deal." Whether he liked or disliked the man was moot. "Like" is a funny one. Identifying with him was important and being as non-judgmental as possible," he explains. "You just try to have a human being up there on the screen, with all the complexities involved. Especially with someone like this, who changed how the world works on an epic scale."

His character's unique hardwiring — the angry Buddhist who revolutionised our lives — provided all the deep complexities actors yearn for but rarely find in a script. "With any brilliant person, there are going to be huge contradictions, because they're passionate about what they're doing," he points out. "They have to be that way." Sorkin takes up the point. "Whether they're a hero or Jack Nicholson in *A Few Good Men*, I have to write my characters as if they are making their case to God why they should be allowed into heaven."

So does heaven now boast its own Genius Bar? "I do believe Steve is in heaven now," adds the writer with a laugh, "and he is very dissatisfied with the way it's run." ■

STEVE JOBS IS OUT ON NOVEMBER 13 AND IS
REVIEWED ON PAGE 40.

LIONS
AND
TIGERS
AND
SCARES,
OH MY!

Scalpings, gangrene, crushed limbs and 125 ferocious
big cats... Why *Roar* makes a good claim to being the
most dangerous movie ever made

WORDS ANDREW OSMOND





"THIS LADY WAS CUDDLING ME LAST NIGHT, AND I SAID, 'I'm sorry, I can't do that. It brings back memories of the lion's mane and I can't breathe...'"

John Marshall laughs wryly, but he's serious. His flashbacks are to the 1970s, when his father, Noel Marshall, was married to Tippi Hedren, known for her lead roles in Hitchcock's *The Birds* and *Marnie*. All of them, plus Hedren's daughter Melanie Griffith and a young Dutch cinematographer named Jan de Bont, were embroiled in an extraordinary production. *Lions, Lions And More Lions*. Starring over a hundred big cats — not just lions, but tigers, jaguars, leopards and cheetahs, bulked out by a couple of elephants — it would come to be renamed *Roar*.

What makes *Roar* unique is that its human cast, primarily the Marshall/Hedren family, is in constant contact with dozens of semi-wild beasts, right there on screen. There was no CG, no stunt doubles. You'd think it was dangerous and you'd be right, as John learned. One summer afternoon in 1973, while he was prepping *Roar*, he was out walking with Tongaru, a lion. Like many of *Roar*'s felines, Tongaru had been raised from a cub by John's family. But Tongaru was unruly...

Walking through long grass, John tripped over a rock. Tongaru pounced, grabbing John's head in his jaws. Mercifully, the lion didn't bite down; rather he took catty possession of the fallen human, declaring *mine, mine, mine* (lions are terrible hoarders). "I got 56 stitches in the head, it took six guys 25 minutes to get the lion off me. I was very scared," John says. He's claustrophobic to this day, hence his resistance to romantic snuggles. But he still stayed on *Roar* (as did Tongaru).

In the film, John's dad Noel plays an eccentric scientist living with a pride of lions in Africa. Sadly he's away when his wife (Hedren) and teen kids (Griffith, with John and Jerry Marshall) come calling at his lion-filled house. The movie consists of them running and hiding from the animals in cheesy slapstick situations, which become terrifying when you realise it's all done for real. John, the older, bearded brother, performs numerous stunts on screen, including being chased by lions and elephants while riding a motorbike. "When a lion tried to bite me, I hit him on the nose," he says. "My father yelled out, 'You ruined the fucking shot!' and I went, 'Hey, but I didn't get bitten.'"

ROAR'S STORY STARTS IN 1969. TIPPI HEDREN, JOHN'S stepmother, had moved on from her difficult time with Hitchcock. While making *Satan's Harvest* in Africa, she and her husband Noel took advantage of a free day to tour a nature preserve in Mozambique. There, they saw something amazing: an abandoned game warden's house taken over by a pride of lions.

"Lions were all over the place," Hedren recalled in her 1985 book *The Cats Of Shambala*. "Some were on the roof, gazing

down at us; others were deep asleep in window frames. Noel said, 'You know, we ought to make a picture of this.'"

Back in America, Hedren and Marshall were told the idea was hair-brained. A bunch of randomly assembled lions would not live as a pride; "They have to be introduced gradually or they may kill each other," one expert told her. The only way to make a film would be to acquire cubs and give them time to get used to each other — to make a home-grown pride. So the couple started buying lions from other big-cat owners and animal preserves, and raised them in their LA home, on Sherman Oaks' Knobhill Drive. They gave the cats the run of the house, even allowing them to sleep at the foot of their bed. "We wanted them to have that constant human relationship," wrote Hedren. "Later our lives would depend on it."

The whole family was involved in raising the cats. Griffith (Tippi's 13 year-old daughter by her first husband, Peter Griffith) pitched in, as did Noel's adult sons Jerry, John and Joel, from his previous marriage. Their situation was the subject of an extraordinary *LIFE* magazine photostory in which a grown lion leaps onto a dinner-party table, and shares blankets with Griffith. John took another lion down to Marina del Rey on a leash, returning with a bunch of girls' phone numbers. "I was the coolest kid in high school," he says. Visitors to the house included William Peter Blatty and William Friedkin, writer and director of a gestating horror project called *The Exorcist*. Noel became Blatty's agent and *The Exorcist*'s exec producer. The hope was the film's "devil dollars" would fund *Roar*'s production, but the money was tied up in a lawsuit until production was nearly over.

However, there were more immediate problems. First, Animal Control demanded the lions — six at the time — be removed from Knobhill. Noel responded by buying Soledad Canyon, which would also stand in for Africa. The cat population burgeoned: more lions, tigers and other cats. The spectacle overrode the objection that there are no tigers in Africa. In the film, it's suggested Noel's character brought the tigers for research reasons.

And then there were the elephants. John remembers standing on an elephant's back with Brooke Shields and Tatum O'Neal, two stars who came to Soledad Canyon. "Every weekend was celebrity weekend," John says. But it was an elephant — through no fault of its own, John stresses — that caused one of *Roar*'s worst accidents. In the film, Hedren was supposed to be lifted out of a river by the elephant's trunk. During one take, her leg was crushed between trunk and tusk, causing her to black out from the agony. She also developed gangrene.

"I was right there," John remembers. "Tippi and I were screaming for help because I can see her leg getting crushed, and everybody thought we were doing a good job acting." Incredibly, the accident is glimpsed in the final film. A shot of Tippi hanging from the trunk is reversed so the elephant appears to be flipping her on its head. "Dad used the shot and then convinced Tippi it was worth getting gangrene because it's in the movie," laughs John. "We were kind of gullible, I guess."

On another occasion, Hedren's character needed to fall down on a tree bridge and be walked on by umpteen lions and tigers. One lioness didn't play nice. Tippi's account is excruciating: "She took most of my head into her mouth, grasping the back of the skull. I could hear her teeth scraping bone... John and I would now share the same memory." Hedren recalls the incident in weird, almost Hitchcockian detail. After Noel extricated her from the lion's mouth she continues, "I remember something very feminine... I've always taken great pride in having long fingernails and I spotted a ripped-off nail-end on the log. I picked it up and put it into my pocket, thinking ▶

PREVIOUS SPREAD: CHRISTOPHEL COLLECTION. THIS SPREAD: CHRISTOPHEL COLLECTION (2), GETTY IMAGES (1), PHOTOFEST (1), REX (2)





1 Real-life wife and husband Tippi Hedren and Noel Marshall bed down with their geographically compromised tigers.

2 Hedren and daughter Melanie Griffith relax on the right side of the fence.

3 Madelaine (Hedren) tries to rescue Melanie (Melanie Griffith) from being mauled in the film (as incongruously pleasant music tinkles).

4 Madelaine falls from a barrel after escaping the lions — only to find herself of interest to a passing elephant.

5 1981's original one-sheet, suggesting a merry jape rather than what was for many a near-death experience.

6 The poster for this year's US re-release. American audiences could watch in theatres in April, while a Region 1 DVD/Blu-ray is out on November 3.

ANIMAL TRAGIC

HOW CREATURE FEATURES CAN SADLY END BADLY FOR HUMANS AND BEASTS...

→ IN GENERAL, THERE'S MORE controversy about the welfare of animals in films than the safety of their human co-stars. In cinema's early days, wild animals were irresistible to the adventurous likes of Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack, who made spectacles such as the jungle epic *Chang: A Drama Of The Wilderness* (1927). It included a tiger shimmying up a tree and gaping its jaws to eat the cameraman (Schoedsack). The directors staged some footage, but admitted killing animals "for the picture". At least the pair moved on to unreal creatures for their greatest collaboration, 1933's *King Kong*.

In *Jesse James* (1939), a horse was thrown fatally from a cliff, leading to the American Humane Association monitoring animal welfare in films. Later causes célèbres include *Cannibal Holocaust* (1980), with its notorious dismembering of a sea turtle, and the same year's *Heaven's Gate*, which reportedly blew up a horse with dynamite.

Human injuries linked to animals in films are often horse-related — tragically so in the case of Roy Kinnear, who died after a fall during *The Return Of The Musketeers* (1989) — but not exclusively so. *Tarzan* actor Mike Henry had his jaw ripped open by his 'Cheeta' chimp while making *Tarzan And The Great River* (1967), while during filming of the Burt Reynolds-starring *Shark* (1969), stuntman Jose Marco was fatally mauled by a fish that had been insufficiently sedated.

Of course, the best-known film-related animal fatalities involve daredevils with a boldness like Noel Marshall's in *Roar*. Crocodile lover Steve Irwin was killed by a stingray in 2006 while filming documentary *Ocean's Deadliest*. And the terrible fate of bear fanatic Timothy Treadwell was presented by Werner Herzog in 2005's *Grizzly Man* (see page 162).



7



8



9



10



11

7 The pride put eccentric scientist Hank (Noel Marshall) and ally Mativo (Kyalo Mativo) in a tight spot.

8 Younger brother Jerry (Jerry Marshall) hangs out with two friendlier felines.

9 Hank opts for the family's favoured method of escaping a marauding lion: a barrel.

10 Hedren flicks through a copy of *She* with "top cat" Robbie for a publicity shot.

11 Older brother John (John Marshall), Madelaine and Jerry flee their lion- and tiger-filled home.



CHRISTOPHEL COLLECTION (4), PICTURE DESK (1)

I would have the manicurist glue it back on."

Famously, Hedren had her first painful screen encounter with wildlife on Hitchcock's *The Birds*, when live birds were flung at her during an attic attack; the ordeal lasted five days and nearly blinded her. (It's cutely referenced in *Roar*; searching the house, Hedren puts her head through a door, sees a bird flutter towards her and withdraws hastily.) Was she trying to go "better" than Hitchcock when she put herself through the trials of *Roar*? "No, I think that she got really unlucky!" laughs John. "Originally, we were going to rent trained lions, and that sounded less scary than [untrained] birds. Little did she know that it was going to get more intense than *The Birds* ever was."

Hedren's daughter would suffer, too. During one scene, a young lioness placed her paws in front of Griffith's face, and when the young actress twisted her head against the movement, the beast's claws "just ripped that beautiful little face", as Hedren would recall later, requiring 50 stitches.

Jan de Bont had an even grislier experience. At the time of *Roar*, the future director of *Speed* was an acclaimed cinematographer in Europe. "It was because of his films like *Keetje Tippel* (on which de Bont was cinematographer for Paul Verhoeven)," says John. "They were amazing. We needed a great cinematographer, and my dad and Jan clicked. Jan was very intense. He expects everybody to be very military in maintaining the equipment, pulling focus and attention to detail." When Jan came to the lion-filled house-cum-set, he demanded changes. "He said, 'We have to change the house, the geography's all wrong, we need a spiral staircase!' We went, 'Who is this guy?' But he was right."

De Bont, though, made a grave error, trying to get an overhead shot of lions from a pit while he wasn't wearing a helmet. A lioness — the same who'd grabbed Tippi on the log — went for him. This time she peeled. "Jan's scalp was literally hanging in front of his head," says John. "I got him on the way to the hospital, and I started calling for other cinematographers because I figure this guy isn't coming back. And de Bont came back days later and stayed five years."

The obvious question is *why* would people stay on such a crazily dangerous film? In de Bont's case, says John, he thought the film would put him on the map. But the driving force of the hairy production was a hairy man: Noel Marshall himself. On screen, he's a feral figure as wild as his beard, diving fearlessly into lion hordes, even breaking up their brawls. Early in the film, he does that and gets a visibly bloody hand. In fact, the hand was punctured, causing an excruciating infection.

"That was what he was really like," John confirms of his father, who died in 2010. "You had to be like that with the animals. I did the same thing. It's all about getting to their level, about volume and no fear; it's a real macho experience. My father was not afraid of anything — that was scary. I was talking to a cameraman on the movie, and he said most of the crew were more afraid of my father than they were of the lions. I was asked if he was a madman or a genius... It didn't take me long to say he was a madman."

Asked if there was any analogy between his father and Hedren's previous director, Hitchcock, John says no. "I did one episode of *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, so I worked with Hitchcock for a week or two." (Prior to *Roar*, John was a TV actor from the age of five on the likes of *Lassie* and *Wagon Train*.) "He didn't seem very intense; he was very organised and professional... with a strange, sick sense of humour."

There was a practical reason why Noel didn't stop production: so much was sunk into it. The costs of maintaining the animals led to him and Hedren selling off practically all their possessions, from the Knobhill home to a fur coat given to Hedren by

Hitchcock. "We didn't think it would take six years to raise the financing and get the animals all worked out," says John. "And then we fell in love with the animals, and the more animals we got, the longer it took to get the money, because we had to feed the animals and pay the taxes. Then we were supposed to film nine months and it took five years. We all wanted to quit, but we had to finish the movie."

Of his father, John says, "I don't want to make excuses for him. There were times when he put all of us in danger, and we all felt it wasn't right, but he had to. He didn't wish that we would die or get hurt or anything, and he didn't think we *would* get hurt. That's what we signed on for. This film had never been done before, we didn't know what to expect. I would never go back and do it again, but it made every other production in my life really easy. I say, 'I'm not afraid of anything, I beat up lions and tigers for 11 years.'"



WHILE THE ON-SET ACCIDENTS ARE THE MOST infamous part of *Roar*'s mythology, there were other catastrophes. Even before shooting began, a virus swept through the animal cast, killing 14 big cats. Then when the film was near completion, a terrifying wall of water hit the canyon at nighttime. In the confusion of the flood, three lions were shot dead by police, including Robbie, a black-maned lion who was the "hero" of the film. (He was replaced in some of *Roar*'s scenes by another lion, his mane sprayed black.) Even that wasn't the end. During the last days of production, a huge blaze in the surrounding hills came close to the property, until firefighters saved the day.

However, no animal was harmed in the course of *Roar*'s shoot. Some trickery is used in scenes when poachers appear to kill lions; the lions on screen were actually anaesthetised, then rolled down gentle slopes in a daze. The filmmakers highlight *Roar*'s seal of approval by the American Humane Association.

The advancement of animal welfare has been *Roar*'s most concrete legacy. Following the film, Hedren established the Roar Foundation, a non-profit organisation to care for the beasts of the film and many like them. The former set in Soledad Canyon became a nature preserve, now called Shambala (its website is shambala.org) and it's now home to Hedren, along with over 40 big cats.

Somewhat ironically, she now campaigns against the buying, selling and breeding of exotic felines. "Tippi doesn't let anybody go in with the animals she has now," says John, who claims Shambala's board of directors doesn't want her to talk about *Roar*. "The mission statement at Shambala is to teach the world that these are wild animals and people shouldn't be [in] with them. The way we all learned that is we got bitten."

But what of the film itself? The drama behind *Roar* is far more wondrous than the disjointed pic that resulted, though it's lifted by the lions themselves and their superb lensing by de Bont. "The film is not brilliant acting and not brilliant writing," John admits. "But we had a lot of obstacles. A good day's acting was, 'We're not in the hospital!' I literally put blood, sweat and tears into this movie for so long, so I want to at least share it with as many people as possible!"

A flop on release (it didn't even open in America), *Roar* is now getting new screenings, not on the strength of its story but of its *reality*. "In all the interviews I do, I always say nobody should try this," John stresses. "We're deathly afraid that people are going to see this and start jumping into lion cages. I always say, 'This is something unusual that should never have happened.' But I don't regret it, it's amazing, everyone should live vicariously through it. Just watch it on the screen!" ■

14%

ONLY 14% OF UK FILMS ARE DIRECTED BY WOMEN

It's time to shift the balance. Some of the most talented women in UK film have already helped 24 young people create films that will premiere at the BFI London Film Festival alongside an exclusive screening of new film **Suffragette**.

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a career in movies.
As much as it
might feel like an

impossible dream, working on the
films and TV shows regularly covered
in *Empire* is within your reach. The
film industry offers all sorts of jobs
to suit every temperament and skill
set, from the technically adept and
cerebrally blessed to the practically
minded or wildly creative. Overleaf
we profile four filmmakers who each
found their own path into making
movies (no-one's dad runs a film
studio) to guide and inspire you.
What becomes clear is that none
of them have been driven by fame or
fortune. This is all about passion for
telling stories in the most exciting
ways possible.

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that could set you on the path to
filmmaking greatness. Good luck!



SARAH GAVRON

IN THE KNOW

HOW TO GET AHEAD IN...

Direction

EMPIRE MEETS SARAH GAVRON, THE DIRECTOR OF NEW FILM SUFFRAGETTE

CV: BRICK LANE (2007), VILLAGE AT THE END OF THE WORLD (2012), SUFFRAGETTE (2015)

How did you get into the business?

As a teenager I didn't watch a lot of films. Then I saw some British films by Terence Davies, Stephen Frears and Mike Leigh and thought, "Wow, there's really a vision here." I started having ideas for film stories but I never dared suggest I train as a director. Then I had a kind of epiphany when I saw the early films of Jane Campion in my twenties and I thought, "Wow, there are women filmmakers, it's possible." That's when I applied to the National Film and Television School.

What do you consider your big break?

I was making all these short films, and I would send them off to festivals. I got no response to some of the early ones but my eighth short film, my graduation film *Losing Touch*, was taken by a lot of festivals and suddenly doors opened —

I got an agent and started talking to people about longer-form projects.

What makes a good director?

It starts with a vision. You're responsible for the look, feel and atmosphere of the film, so it's about communication and collaboration. The thing I love is that people you work with bring things to the table that you'd never have thought of.

What does your role entail?

It's always changing. In pre-production, anything is possible. The shoot is like live performance, very pressured but hugely exciting. Then in post-production there's just two of you in a room, quietly putting together the jigsaw. It's very different at each stage, and I love that.

What has been the biggest challenge of your career?

Suffragette, definitely! There were so many elements I hadn't done before, but it was a story I was passionate about telling.

What advice would you give young people who want to get into directing?

Keep going, don't lose your confidence and believe in your vision. Find collaborators who you trust, that's key, because together you can be a much stronger force than individually.

Carey Mulligan
as *Suffragette's*
Maud Watts.



TOP TIP
Find your own voice; at the beginning I was quite derivative and you have to trust your own instincts and go with what you believe.

TALK
THE
TALK

MOVIE-MAKING JARGON EXPLAINED

ADR

Automated Dialogue Replacement. The process of re-recording lines to replace poor-quality sound or change a line-reading.

BLOCKING

The process of staging a scene before you shoot it to decide actors' movements, lighting and camera placements.

DAILIES

The prints of footage shot the previous day, viewed by the director and the creative team the following day. Also known as "rushes".

THE MARTINI SHOT

The last shot of the day.

PICK-UPS

Shots done after the end of shooting, often things that became apparent after editing.

WINNEBAGO

The trailers used by movie stars on sets. Not to be confused with 'honeywagons' which are portable loos.

SQUIB

An explosive device used to replicate bullet hits or small explosions. Perhaps the most famous use occurs in *The Godfather*, when a hail of bullets hits Sonny Corleone (James Caan) at the tollbooth.

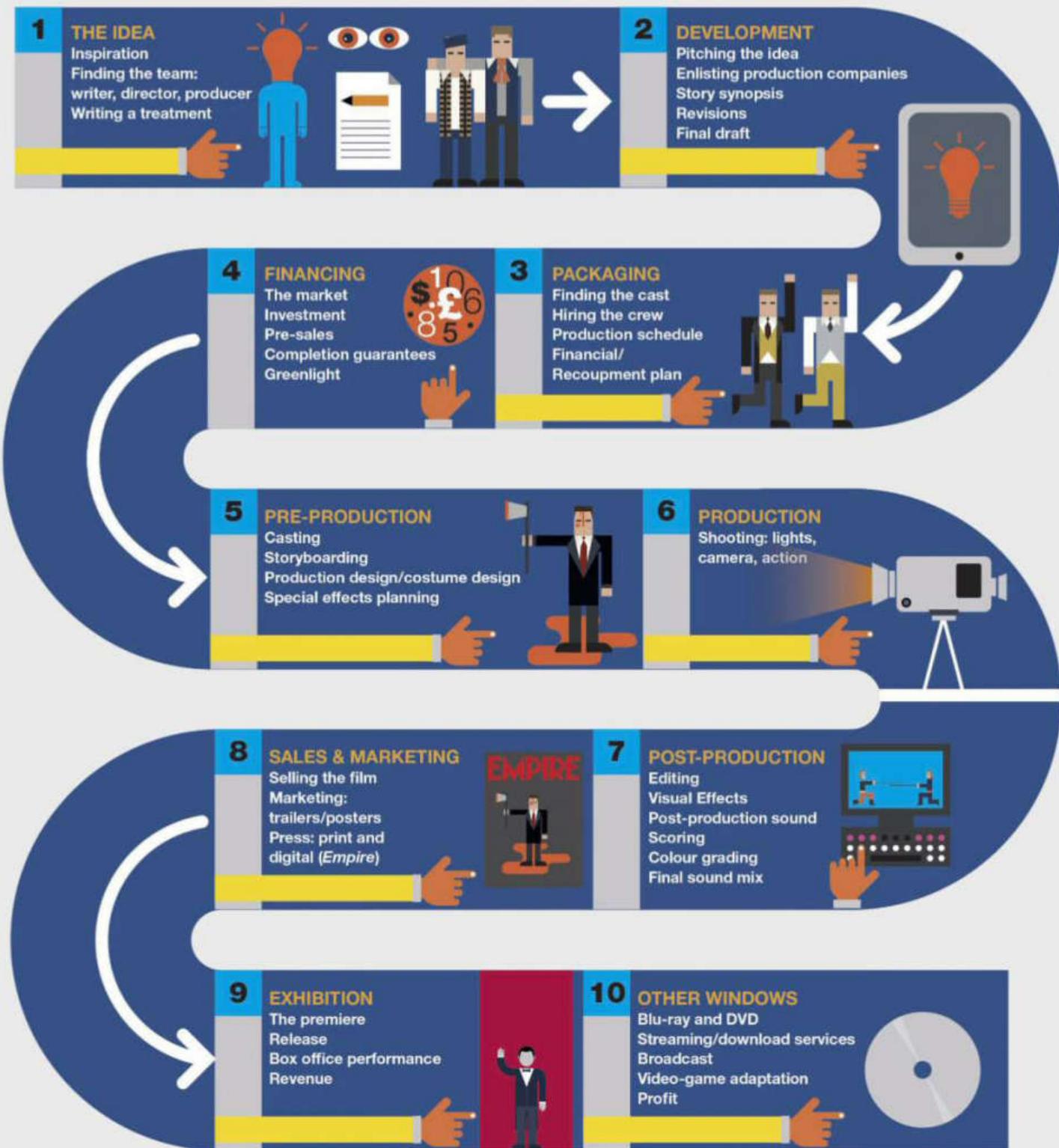
WRAP

The end of shooting. Hence, "It's a wrap."

THE JOURNEY OF A FILM

HOW A MOVIE MAKES ITS WAY FROM PAGE ONE TO PREMIERE PARTY

ILLUSTRATION INFOMEN





ANNABEL CANAVEN

IN THE KNOW

HOW TO GET AHEAD IN...

Stunt Work

EMPIRE MEETS ANNABEL CANAVEN, STUNT PERFORMER

CV: SKYFALL (2012), KINGSMAN: THE SECRET SERVICE (2014), EVEREST (2015), SUFFRAGETTE (2015)

How did you get into the business?

In my early twenties I started at live jousting shows at the local castle. I already did a lot of riding but I worked as a squire for a couple of years, and then did three summers performing on the horses. I broke my ribs doing it – but that wasn't meant to happen! It's all choreographed. Some of the guys I was jousting with did filming, so I found out about the stunt register and started training.

What was your big break?

I didn't have one big break; it was mainly working with more people and getting better known. It takes a couple of years.

What attributes do you need to work in stunts?

You need to be good in so many



disciplines. You need to be brave, but not reckless. Being quite acrobatic helps – gymnastics for falls and things like that.

What has been the biggest challenge of your career?

Staying sharp. The other day I had to do a 30-foot back-fall off a cliff so I did some training to get used to the height again. The same with fire jobs – I need to practise because you have to hold your breath when you're on fire.

What advice would you give to people who want to get into stunts?

Getting onto the stunt register is the



TOP TIP

If someone asks if you can do a stunt, be honest. Sometimes the phone might not ring for a while and it is disheartening, but don't give up.

easy bit (NB: to qualify you need to be filmed doing stunts then submit them). You need to keep your training up and be on top of your game.

What about being a female stunt performer?

When I joined six years ago, there were 200 men and 50 women on the register. There are so many more jobs for men out there. You only have to look at a pub fight scene – I recognised all my friends in *Legend* as drinkers. There are many more men fighting than women – *Bond*, *War Horse*. Sometimes you do get dressed up as a guy, but any war films like that are male-dominated.

THE INSPIRATION GAME

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM FILMMAKING'S FINEST

“The film industry is about saying ‘no’ to people, and inherently you cannot take ‘no’ for an answer.”

JAMES CAMERON

“You gotta make your own way. You gotta find a way. You gotta get it done. It's hard. It's tough.”

SPIKE LEE

“There are always things I wish were different... But I don't mind that it's a little homemade.”

SOFIA COPPOLA



GEMMA JACKSON

IN THE KNOW

HOW TO GET AHEAD IN...

Production Design

EMPIRE MEETS GEMMA JACKSON, PRODUCTION DESIGNER

CV: FINDING NEVERLAND (2004), GAME OF THRONES (2011-2013), KNIGHTS OF THE ROUNDTABLE: KING ARTHUR (2016)

How did you get into the business?

I studied painting, but I wasn't philosophically a painter. I went to the theatre all the time, so for my thesis I wrote about theatre. I got onto a wonderful post-graduate course in theatre design and everything just came into focus. I worked in theatre for eight or nine years before, out of the blue, I got a call from the BFI to make a film. They were terribly apologetic that they could pay me only £30 a day, and at that point I was earning £30 a week! Really, that was the beginning of my life.

What was your big break?

Probably a film called *Paper House*, for Working Title. It's a real strange and beautiful film of which I'm still proud.

What does your job entail?

I design the physical look of the film: the architecture, the colours. Not the costumes, but I've been lucky to work with lovely costume designers. As much as I can on the big films, I am also involved with the VFX.

What has been the biggest challenge of your career?

Different things are challenging at different times in your development. *Paper House* was hard – but so was *Game Of Thrones*, inventing a whole world there in ten episodes.

What advice would you give to people who would like to get into production design?

You've got to decide what turns you on and really go for it, and do as much as you can to educate yourself in that area.

What would you say are the downsides of your job?

When you're working, it is so all-consuming that there is very little time for anything else, so when you stop you tend to fall apart a little bit. Also, having to travel a lot is amazing, but it does wreak a bit of havoc with your home life, but that is outweighed by the plus side. I absolutely love every single aspect of my job. You can't worry about the end result, you just have to love the work.

Game Of Thrones'
iconic Iron Throne.

WHAT'S A BEST BOY?

WEIRD MOVIE JOB TITLES EXPLAINED

BOOM OPERATOR

The sound technician who wields the boom, the telescopic pole with the microphone attached.

BEST BOY

Assistant to the gaffer (see below).

GAFFER

The chief electrician on a film set, responsible for supplying, placing, operating and maintaining the lights.

CRAFT SERVICES

The US term for the team responsible for providing food and drink to the crew. The most famous example is Javva The Hutt.

FOLEY ARTIST

A sound effects artist who creates sounds that are recorded to match the images on screen (for example, smashing melons to replicate punches in *Raging Bull*).

GRIP

A stagehand responsible for transporting and setting up equipment and props. Led by the Key Grip.

LEADPERSON

The head of the Swing Gang (see below) who assists the set decorator in obtaining, storing and placing the various set dressings.

SWING GANG

The team that sets up and dismantles a set for filming. Not a bad wedding band.



TOP TIP

You've got to be awake and alert and available for things to happen to you. Positivity, strength, determination and creativity are what you need.



GOTHINKBIG

A one-stop shop for work opportunities and advice.
gothinkbig.co.uk

SHOOTING
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A networking organisation dedicated to independent filmmaking.
shootingpeople.org.uk

THE KNOWLEDGE

The definitive source of UK film and TV contacts.
theknowledgeonline.com

BROADCAST

Journal for the UK television industry. Good source for news and jobs.
broadcastnow.co.uk

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A charitable organisation designed to promote appreciation, education and love of film, TV and moving images.
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EMPIRE ONLINE

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empireonline.com

O2 THINK BIG

Funding, training and support for 13-25-year-olds for the digital world.
O2thinkbig.co.uk



IN THE KNOW

HOW TO GET AHEAD IN...

Visual Effects

EMPIRE MEETS JOHN J. GALLOWAY, DIGITAL COMPOSITOR
AT INDUSTRIAL LIGHT & MAGIC

CV: *ANT-MAN* (2015), *THE MARTIAN* (2015),
STAR WARS: THE FORCE AWAKENS (2015)

How did you get you get into the business?

I grew up in the middle of nowhere in the countryside so getting a career at somewhere like ILM was as likely as becoming an astronaut. I would make little films with my friends and started meeting people. I visited a post-production house and saw that they were doing compositing. It seemed empowering.

What does your job entail?

We take various elements, whether they are shot on film, CG, live action, matte paintings, miniatures or green-screen, and pull all those elements together to create a cohesive final image. People usually think it is something to do with composting, working with earthworms.

What attributes do you need?

You need to be a problem solver. All these elements that come together do not fit as a perfect jigsaw puzzle. You

also need to be open to positive criticism and not take it to heart.

What has been the biggest challenge of your career?

The Ant-Man vs. Falcon scene was shot entirely in winter but we had to make it look like it was shot on a lush, green day.

How exciting is it to be working on a *Star Wars* film?

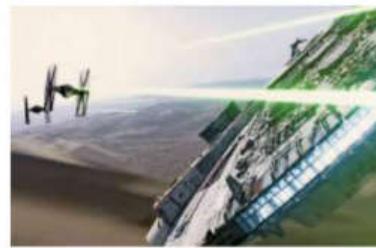
I can't say how thrilling it is. I can't say how unreal it is. It's so exciting. It's not just this film we are working on, but seeing what is coming up. We've got some stuff that is going to bust your brains out.

What are the downsides of your job?

I love hiking and the outdoors. Now I'm in a job where I am predominantly stuck in a dark room in front of a computer screen.

What advice would you give to people who want to get into visual effects?

The best thing you can do is get out there and get your hands dirty. Try things out and make mistakes.



DARE TO DREAM BIG

CHARLOTTE REGAN, A 21 YEAR-OLD FILM STUDENT, EXPLAINS HOW GOTHINKBIG INSPIRED HER TO START A PRODUCTION COMPANY

WAS SHOOTING a lot of low-budget rap videos for mates and local artists. Rappers on rooftops doing gun fingers or standing in front of their estate. At the time I was calling in favours. My little cousin George would hold all the lights. I had no idea how you progressed from a video that cost £50 to a video that had an actual budget.

The Lost Generation project with GoThinkBig was a chance to intern on a Rizzle Kicks video shoot. You had to send in a five-minute video about yourself and choose which role you wanted to shadow. I picked director and luckily got the opportunity to follow (writer-director) Jamie Thraves. It was amazing. I'm obsessed with all his videos now, particularly Radiohead's *Just*.

I first met Jamie in pre-production. He talked me through the idea and the treatment. We went location scouting and I sat in on all his meetings. Then on shoot days, I followed him around. He kept talking to me about the shots and I could give my input at any time. I got to sit in on the edit and the colour grade as well.

I learnt so much about how everything worked. I didn't know what a First AD was or anything like that. Jamie also taught me how to pitch and get work. Before I had no idea if it was what I wanted to do, but it made me study digital film production at university and pursue music videos. I started a production company, RISER, with my friends. From £50, we are now getting budgets of a few thousand pounds. I don't think there is anything better than getting paid to create my or somebody else's ideas.

GoThinkBig offers the most hands-on opportunities you can get. I'd been looking for experience but it was all in offices, nothing that offered the chance to be close to a director. Looking at the website, as I often do, all the placements are like that: practical and intense. That's exactly what you need to see the way things really are.

PORTRAIT TOM HOWARD. A BIG THANKS TO PICTUREHOUSE CENTRAL

WAS SHOOTING a lot of low-budget rap videos for mates and local artists. Rappers on rooftops doing gun fingers or standing in front of their estate. At the time I was calling in favours. My little cousin George would hold all the lights. I had no idea how you progressed from a video that cost £50 to a video that had an actual budget.

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Here: Charlotte Regan, sporting standard film industry cap. Below: Rizzle Kicks, where the journey began...



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REVIEW



OCTOBER 29 – NOVEMBER 25, 2015 | EDITED by NICK DE SEMLYEN



NEW RELEASE

JURASSIC WORLD

Director Colin
Trevorrow talks us
through his monster
hit. (p.126)

ILLUSTRATION NOMA BAR



DVD

BR

BLU-RAY



iTUNES



SKY STORE



SKY MOVIES

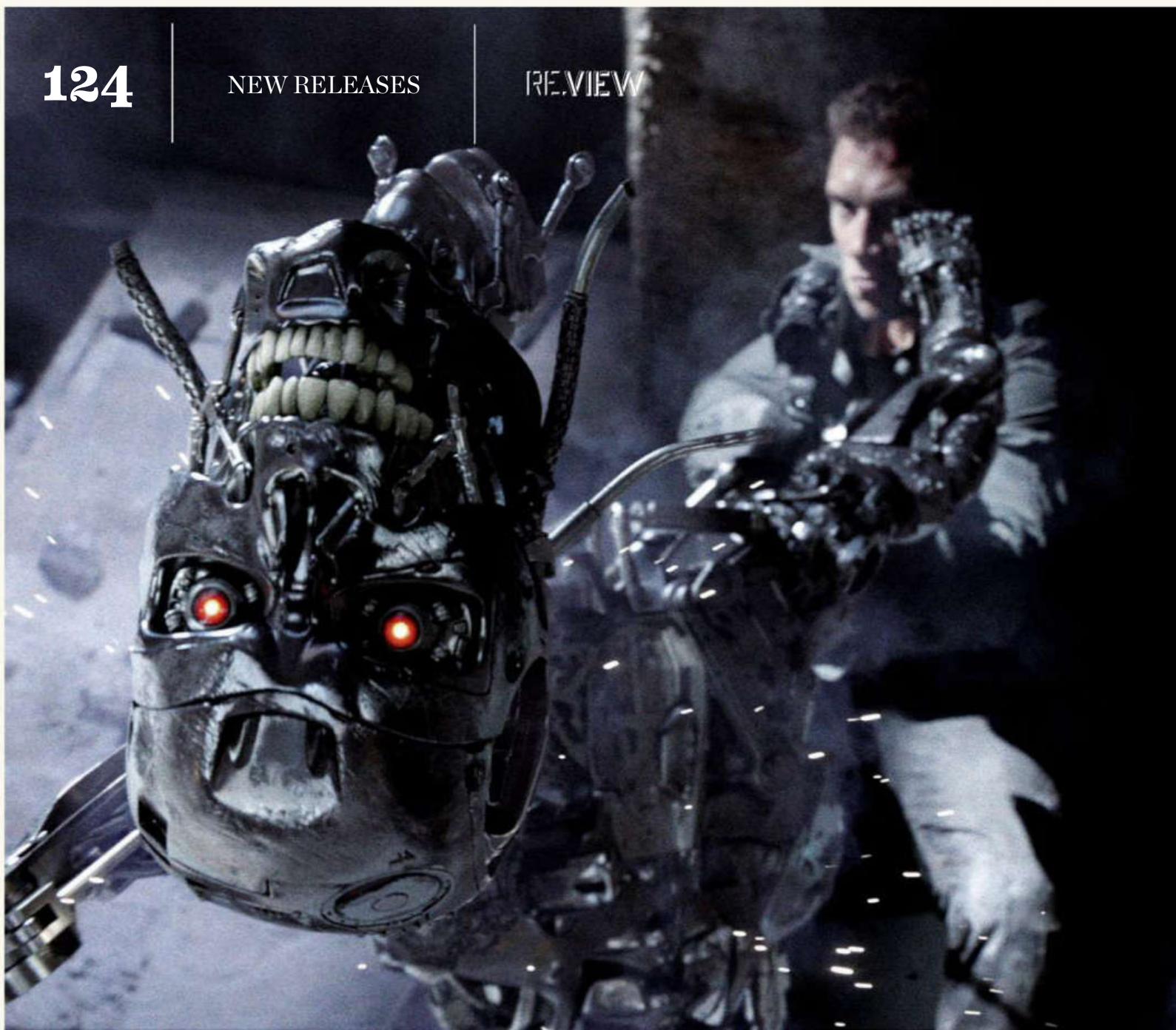


NETFLIX



AMAZON





Terminator Genisys



FROM NOW / CERT. 12



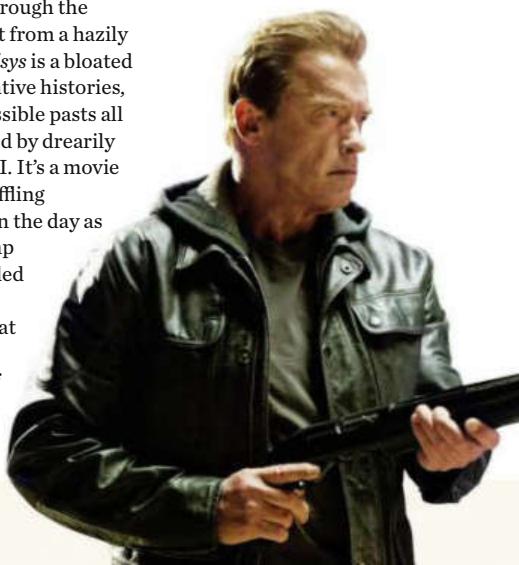
ROBOTS IN DECLINE



ONE OF THE MORE unexpected moments of the last few months in the cinematic firmament was the sight of the normally cagey James Cameron popping up on the internet to lend his seal of approval to the latest attempt to jump-start his tarnished *Terminator* franchise. A once beloved property, it last delivered anything unarguably enjoyable 30 years ago, despite multitudinous revival attempts in diverse media. But if watching Cameron sing the praises of the latest resurrection before you'd seen it was disconcerting, afterwards it's downright incomprehensible.

That *Terminator Genisys* is terrible is beyond arguing. What's almost thrilling is the pitiful thoroughness with which it

totally misunderstands its source material. Thus while Cameron's originals were ripped masterclasses in narrative efficiency – vulnerable protagonist pursued through the present day by killerbot from a hazily sketched future – *Genisys* is a bloated smorgasbord of alternative histories, flexible futures and possible pasts all occasionally punctuated by drearily off-the-peg wanton CGI. It's a movie labouring under the baffling impression that, back in the day as we watched Arnie stomp into a soon-to-be-levelled cop-shop brandishing a sawn-off shotgun, what we *really* wanted was osmium-dense clods of constipated exposition charting numerous





timelines, all squeezed out with agonised effort.

In the face of this relentless temporal tomfoolery, any sense of common-or-garden peril, the notion of the ordinary Joe colliding with a terrifying fragment from a nightmarish future, has quietly evaporated. With (occasionally combative) Emilia Clarke's Sarah Connor already a toolshed-up resistance fighter-in-waiting and (buff and dull) Jai Courtney's Kyle Reese established as a fully functioning future-soldier from the get-go, everybody turns up to the drearily predictable third-act destruction derby reasonably well-matched.

Arnie, meanwhile, is transformed into an avuncular comedy sidekick and a fidgety bystander at his own party. At one point we're informed that, while waiting 30 years for one of Genisys'

infernal timelines to work itself out, 'Pops' worked in construction "until I was laid off". A T-800 has to pass as a hod carrier in '90s America? There's probably a movie there. It'd doubtless be a hell of a lot more entertaining than this one.

The overall impression is of a franchise involved in a final act of desperate self-destruction. The dying patient – begging for an end to his suffering – sees the well-meaning emergency room doctor approaching with the electric paddles, and begins to gnaw his own limbs off: suicide by self-consumption. Given that the final two entries in this planned trilogy are still apparently in the works, a dignified release may be cruelly denied this superannuated cyborg: Pops will not be allowed to eat himself. **ADAM SMITH**

ALSO OUT



Minions

★★★

FROM NOVEMBER 16 / CERT. U DVD BR APP

→ Minions is the world's new second-biggest animated movie of all time – sorry, Toy Story 3 – and there's nothing you can do about it. The cinematic equivalent of a giant bag of Haribo with a lit firework inside, it's hyper-kinetic gibberish and barely holds together as a story, but you *will* laugh, no matter how hard you try not to. **AP**



Amy

★★★★

FROM NOVEMBER 2 / CERT. 15 DVD BR APP

→ A study of talent, self-doubt and the corrosive nature of fame, this account of the rise and fall of Amy Winehouse is deeply moving. You may already be familiar with her career, but there are revelations here even for super-fans. And Asif Kapadia's wider exploration of media abuse gives his documentary a resonance far beyond the music. **HOH**

LIKE
THIS,
WATCH
THIS



**BACK TO
THE FUTURE
PART II**

1989

Another sequel which remixes the original. Instead of two T-800s, you get two Marty McFlys.



Slow West

★★★★

FROM NOW / CERT. 15 DVD BR APP

→ Michael Fassbender becomes the Fass With No Name in John Maclean's throwback treat of a Western. Glinting with charm and menace, the star wanders Montana as a mysterious gunslinger shepherding Kodi Smit-McPhee to his lost love. The climactic shootout is up there with the bullet blizzards of Peckinpah and Leone. **PDS**



Jurassic World

★★★★★

FROM NOW / CERT. 12

DVD BR A

MAN RECREATES DINOSAURS



JURASSIC WORLD'S trailer money-shot saw a dangling great white gobbed by a hulking mosasaurus.

Looking back, it may as well have been Iron Man hanging there. This summer, superheroes ceded box-office domination to something much older. With more teeth. While it's strange to consider the fourth film in a 22 year-old franchise an underdog, it was heartening to see that kids (of all ages) continue to dig those lovely, terrible lizards.

Some put the film's success down to Chris Pratt, and there's no denying the potency of the actor's charm. But it didn't hurt to have at the helm a director who himself is a *Jurassic Park* nut. In the solid but repetitive extras (disposable deleted scenes and a few featurettes), Colin Trevorrow explains how he aimed to tell the story from a child's perspective. *Jurassic World* has that Amblin vibe he intended, and the strength of its set-pieces compensates for the plot holes (wouldn't they check for CCTV footage of the Indominus Rex climbing the wall?) and occasional cornball dialogue ("Depends what kinda dinosaur they cooked up in that lab").

While great on the rampage, the Indominus also feels undercooked. Pratt's line about her seeing the world for the first time is interesting – given her enforced dysfunctionality, we should feel more sympathy for her, as we do for Koba in the *Apes* films. And after a while, she just stops acting smart. Or using her camouflage power, for that matter. Still, you can't ignore the satirical bite: making up something new because punters don't think dinosaurs are "wow enough" anymore. Hmm... DAN JOLIN

EMPIRE VIEWING GUIDE

EMPIRE
SPOILER
ALERT!

WORDS NICK DE SEMLYEN

DIRECTOR COLIN TREVORROW WALKS US THROUGH THE PARK



CHAPTER 1

1:43

The New Batch

The very first image of *Jurassic World* is an egg cracking. Meet the Indominus Rex (and sister). "We were intent on starting with a birth," says Trevorrow. "I was very conscious about the number of *Jurassic Park* references we had, and I wanted to declare early on that this wasn't going to be a carbon copy."



CHAPTER 1

2:08

Total Recall

Gray's View-Master toy contains a frame from 1956 film *The Animal World*. "It's echoed by a shot in the final battle," says the director. "Ty Simpkins has a great look on his face in that moment, and that was his only direction: 'You saw this same thing inside your View-Master this morning in Wisconsin, and now it's happening for real.'"



CHAPTER 2

8:26

Where's The Beef?

Here's a glimpse of Winston's, a restaurant named in honour of the late SFX titan Stan Winston. According to the menu on the movie's website, they serve up a choice-cut Black Angus steak – Winston's favourite dish.





CHAPTER 6

34:03

Malcolm In The Middle

Ever wondered what became of chaotic chaotician Ian Malcolm, as played by Jeff Goldblum in the first two *Jurassic* films? Turns out he wrote a popular book called *God Creates Dinosaurs*, seen here in the control room and earlier on the monorail.



CHAPTER 13

1:16:36

All-You-Can-Eat Buffett

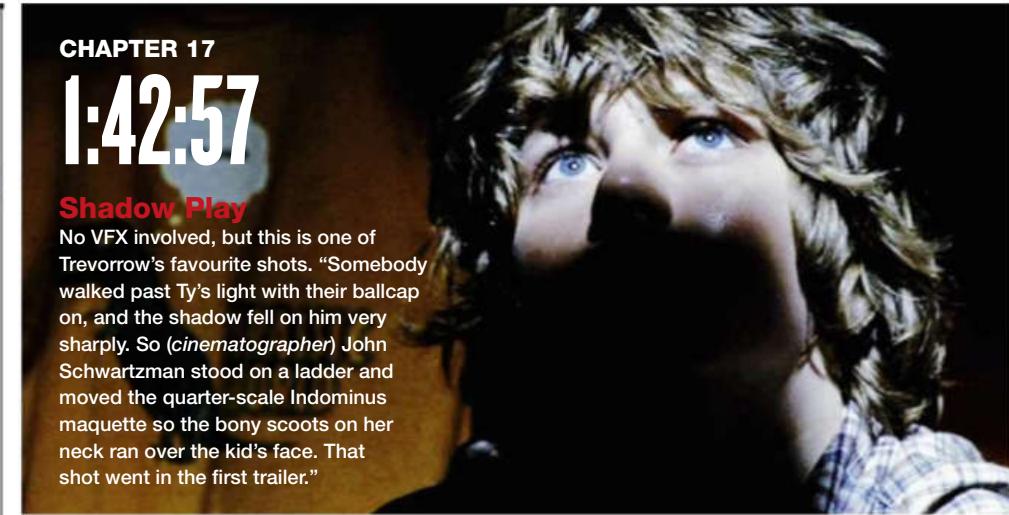
This tourist, grabbing two margaritas as he flees from marauding pteranodons, is in fact musician/Margaritaville-founder Jimmy Buffett. "The best thing about Jimmy's cameo is that it came from such an honest place," says Trevorrow. "He knew he was supposed to run away, but when the moment came something deep within Jimmy Buffett said, 'I'm gonna save these margaritas.' It was pure instinct."

CHAPTER 17

1:42:57

Shadow Play

No VFX involved, but this is one of Trevorrow's favourite shots. "Somebody walked past Ty's light with their ballcap on, and the shadow fell on him very sharply. So (cinematographer) John Schwartzman stood on a ladder and moved the quarter-scale Indominus maquette so the bony scoots on her neck ran over the kid's face. That shot went in the first trailer."



CHAPTER 18

1:44:40

Bad To The Bone

As the T-Rex pursues Claire, it smashes through the skeleton of a spinosaurus, glorious payback for the battle in *Jurassic Park III* in which the bigger beast won. Proof that this movie was made by total nerds.



CHAPTER 18

1:46:50

Monster Mash

Three of *Jurassic World*'s apex predators take on the Indominus. "(Dinosaur supervisor) Phil Tippett and I blocked that out on a model set with toy dinosaurs," says Trevorrow. "It's three long shots knitted together, from the slow-motion raptor run all the way to the mosasaurus breach, combining a Technocrane, a dolly move and a camera on the back of a motorcycle. I think that one's pretty rad."



ON-SET EXCLUSIVE

LUTHER

TV'S MOST DEDICATED
DETECTIVE RETURNS FOR
A LIMITED PERIOD ONLY

WORDS OWEN WILLIAMS



IT'S A BRIGHT
spring morning in
Bethnal Green and
a hunched Idris
Elba is loping across
a road, with hands
stuffed firmly in

the pockets of a familiar tweed coat,
blood-red tie flapping in the wind.
Despite creator Neil Cross' insistence
that the 2013 finale marked the end of
his small-screen exploits, DCI John
Luther is back on the East London beat.

"We thought the fans maybe felt
a little unsatisfied," growls Elba, in
Luther's rumbling bass. "So we decided
to do one more before making *Luther*
into a movie one day." The result is two
hour-long episodes that will pick up
after the on-screen carnage of Series 3,
which ended with long-time sidekick
DS Ripley (Warren Brown) taking

a fatal shotgun blast to the chest.

"You're best off avoiding Luther,"
Elba grins. "People die around him all
the time — someone's always getting
hurt. That'll always be part of it: really
horrible people doing horrible things!"

Having already faced a succession of
serial killers with peculiar idiosyncrasies
(occultism, racism, vigilantism, a shoe-
fetish), Luther will spend Series 4 in
pursuit of a murderer with a taste for
human flesh: a computer technician
who spies on would-be victims through
their webcams.

Pictures of this particular
killer's work are currently pinned to
a corkboard in the bullpen of a disused
telecom building (subbing here for
police HQ). Boys in blue mill about
while Michael Smiley's Benny and new
addition Rose Leslie (playing detective
Emma Jones) pore over the cannibal's

Above: Idris Elba
pounds London's
pavements with
his characteristic
swagger in pursuit of
a computer-expert
cannibal. Right:
Darren Boyd's DCI
Theo Bloom is joined
by *Game Of Thrones'*
Rose Leslie as DS
Emma Jones.





leftovers. Luther, meanwhile, paces back and forth, glowering up a storm as he imagines what he'll do when he eventually gets the killer in a room.

"I think that's what attracted me," Elba tells us between takes. "Luther is a good guy, but at the same time he doesn't mind going after a criminal in a way outside of what he's supposed to be doing as a detective. I just love the concept that he's as bad as the bad guys, but working on the good side. Everything was quite politically correct on British TV for a while, then along came a TV show with a hero who's kicking down doors and throwing criminals over railings."

Having decamped to Hollywood in recent years, with a recurring part as Asgardian Heimdall in the Marvel movies and a secret role in the upcoming *Star Trek Beyond*, fans were pleasantly surprised to see Elba returning to the humble BBC. But here he sits, in a green room comprising a camp table, two space heaters and a half-eaten bag of thick-sliced Kingsmill.

"It's about my roots," he insists. "I consider *Luther* to be part of my heritage. And I actually love doing television. I think I'm probably one of the first actors that was part of this wave where being on TV and on film at the same time was cool. For me, it feels even cooler to go off and do big films, then come back and knock the socks out of a really good TV drama."

At two hours, Series 4 is *Luther*'s most concise outing yet, but the detective's swan-song will feature "explosions" in his personal life and some suitably dark chapters from his past, including connections to a long-dead case involving a child molester.

And what of Ruth Wilson's sociopathic Alice, Luther's unlikely ally who remains on the run? "Her presence is definitely felt," teases Elba. "She's a great character; we love her. And that's all I'm going to say..."

LUTHER: SERIES 4 AIRS ON BBC ONE IN DECEMBER.

ALSO OUT



Mad Men: The Final Season Part 2

★★★★★

FROM NOW / CERT. 15

DVD BR

→ The finale to Matthew Weiner's study of the '60s delivers multilateral closure while losing none of its focus. Highlight: a hungover Peggy (Elisabeth Moss) striding down a corridor, holding a Japanese woodcut of a woman being pleasured by two octopuses. This, after all, was never just Don Draper's story. **JD**



Hand Of God: Season 1

★★

FROM NOW / CERT. 15

→ Boasting a great cast led by Ron Perlman and Garret Dillahunt, a fertile concept and direction from the likes of Marc Forster, this nevertheless fails to feel heaven-sent. The story of a corrupt judge who believes he's been given a mission of vengeance by the Almighty, it suffers from duff dialogue and enough crime-genre clichés to fill a cathedral. **JW**



Justified: Season 6

★★★★

FROM NOW / CERT. 15

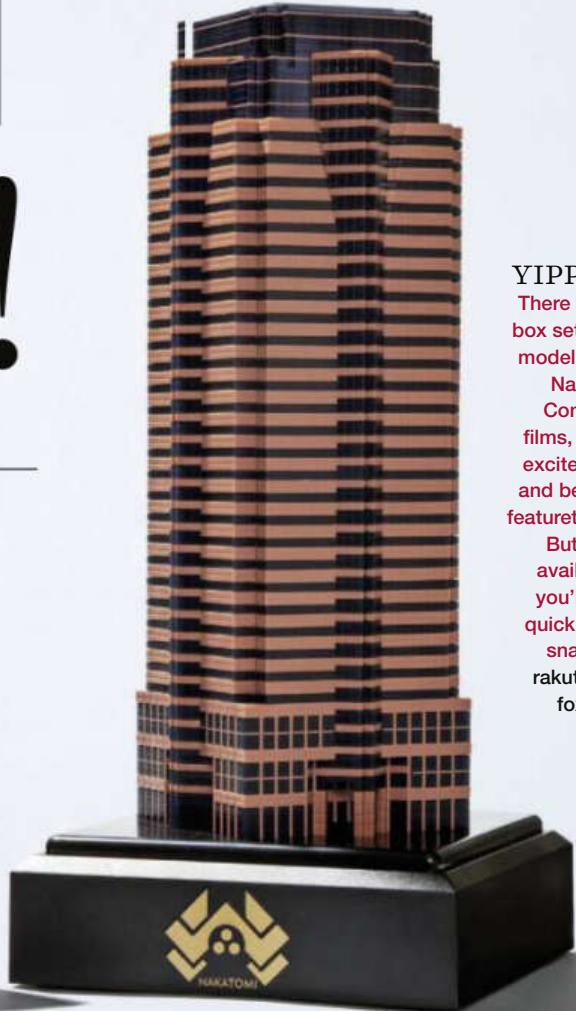
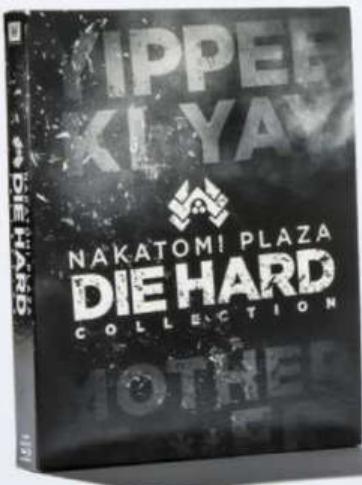
DVD BR

→ Over its six-year run, Graham Yost's crime show has seen cowboy lawman Raylan Givens (Timothy Olyphant) and small-time kingpin Boyd Crowder (Walton Goggins) orbit Harlan County like two pissed-off planets. This final season sends them on a collision course, re-igniting their love/hate rivalry and making this a worthy farewell. **JD**

Want!

THE COOLEST GIFTS AND GADGETS AROUND

PHOTOGRAPHY ANDY PARSONS



YIPPEE-KI-YAY!

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rakuten.co.uk/shop/foxdirect, £100



REMEMBER TO IRON, MAN
The Hawkeyes out there will have spotted Tony Stark rocking this in *Avengers: Age Of Ultron*. Featuring Bruce Lee on the decks, it may be the coolest T-shirt in a movie this year (sorry, *Jurassic World*'s Lowery).

vanillaunderground.com, £34.99

DE-LECTER-BLE

Fancy making like Hannibal The Cannibal? This Dinner With Lecter set — containing fava beans and a nice Chianti, plus napkin — will hit the spot. Just try not to eat anyone.

firebox.com, £29.99



YOU CAN HANDLE THE SLEUTH

With this new action figure, Benedict Cumberbatch's Sherlock has been turned into a great mouse-sized detective. Mind palace sold separately.

bbcshop.com/sherlock, £12.99







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Kim Newman's MOVIE DUNGEON

DON'T GO INTO THE WOODS. OR BEACH. OR HOUSE...

ILLUSTRATION JOHN ROYLE

DECENT ADDITION to the recent run of horror-suspense films in an isolated locale, Isaac Gabaeff's *The Sand* is also the first man-eating-monster lurking-under-the-beach movie since *Blood Beach* (1980). After a party, some college kids wake up to find a tentacular creature — a disappointing CGI doodle — ready to melt anyone who steps on the sand. The film thinks through its contrived set-up with admirable rigour — plus Jamie Kennedy is funny as a useless patrolman.

Mickey Keating's *Pod* is a jittery cabin-in-the-woods picture, with uptight Dean Cates and slacker Lauren Ashley Carter venturing into the wilds to calm their crackpot brother (Brian Morvant), who claims he has an alien locked in the basement. It convincingly straddles the indie relationship drama and UFO creature-feature as allegiances shift and the characters make terrible decisions.

Director and cameo-king Larry Fessenden turns up in the last reel of

Pod, but gets the title role in Robert Olsen and Dan Berk's *Body*, a Christmas-set *Very Bad Things* picture about three gal pals on an ill-advised spree and a not-quite-dead corpse. It's a tight, 75-minute B picture with a cynical edge and some great girl-on-girl trash-talking.

Crazy ladies are a current Dungeon theme, and there are outstanding turns from Sarah Bolger and Ashley C. Williams in the title roles of Michael Thelin's *Emelie* and Matthew A. Brown's *Julia*. *Emelie* is a troublemaking babysitter who dispenses un-Mary Poppins advice like, "Sometimes it's okay to destroy things for fun," in a night of child-endangerment. *Julia*, a sexual-abuse survivor, embarks on a radical therapy that turns her into a penis-severing vigilante, as the film turns into a trippy, gory spectacle. Takashi Miike's theatrical *Over Your Dead Body*, based on a Japanese ghost story, is about an actress cast as an avenging ghost who gets too into her role when her co-star/bf treats her as badly as her character's husband.

More heroic leading ladies feature in Adam Levin's unsettling *Estranged* — a gothic British piece with Amy Manson as an amnesiac returned to the bosom of a creepy family who won't tell her why she left — and Tyler Shields' brisk, smart *Final Girl*, with Abigail Breslin as an avenger posing as the likely innocent victim of a pack of well-heeled sociopaths she lures to their justified fates in the woods.

Demonic and *The Diabolical* are standard spook stories with twists. *Demonic* is semi-found-footage, with Maria Bello and Frank Grillo looking over film footage to spot a possessed killer. *The Diabolical* has Ali Larter stuck in a haunted house, which turns out to be the opening to a wormhole.



PICKS OF THE MONTH

1

AfterDeath

→ In Gez Medinger and Robin Schmidt's creepy, original

Brit flick, five young people killed in the collapse of an overcrowded nightclub wake

up in a beach-house limbo which contracts as their souls are gradually claimed by hell. A claustrophobic mystery with vivid characters, it has a novel rationale for the cast's good looks, daring theology, dark humour and plenty of clever, surprising twists.

2

Justice League: Gods And Monsters

→ This animated

feature offers alternative DC Universe takes on Superman (the mean, goateed son of Zod), Batman (a vampire

Kirk Langstrom, not Bruce Wayne) and Wonder Woman (an alien berserker Jack Kirby creation). Besides the gimmick reinterpretations and edgier tone, it runs to a decent murder mystery about who's killing the world's greatest scientists.

3

The Night Has Eyes

→ Glamorously

doom-haunted James Mason hides in a shadowed, crumbling mansion (complete with a secret room) on the bog-ridden Yorkshire moors, terrified that the full moon will turn him homicidal. Intrepid Joyce Howard falls in love with him as she sticks around to investigate her friend's disappearance a year earlier. A rare full-blooded wartime British horror film with one shock moment — involving a throttled rabbit — that still scares.



B
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FILMS TO FALL IN LOVE WITH
FILMS TO BREAK YOUR HEART

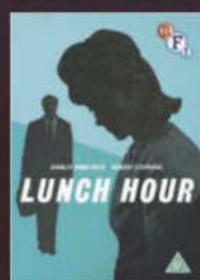
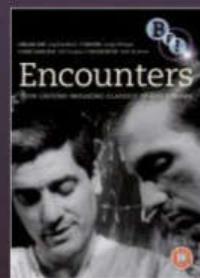
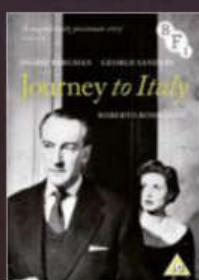
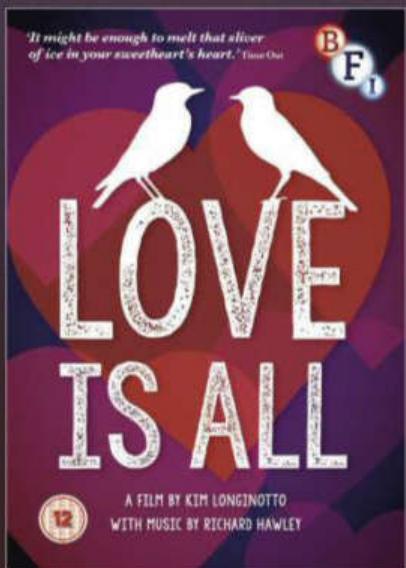


Image: Love Is All

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Spy

★★★

FROM NOVEMBER 9 / CERT. 15

DVD BR A

THE LAUGHING DAYLIGHTS

LOT HAS BEEN SAID about how Jason Statham is *Spy*'s secret weapon, elevating Paul Feig's secret-agent caper to new heights with a rip-roaring,

straight-aced turn as indestructible super-spy, Rick Ford. And it's true — Statham is hugely funny (not for the first time, as fans of *Crank* will attest), whether he's talking about how he successfully went undercover as Barack Obama, or dancing up a storm in a wig last seen on a '70s pimp.

But the film's principal weapon, its primary instrument of comedic destruction, is star Melissa McCarthy.

In *Bridesmaids* and *The Heat*, her previous collaborations with comedy king Feig, McCarthy played a coarse, uncouth loudmouth, farting and wisecracking (but mostly farting) her

way through life. Recognising that that persona is perhaps running out of steam, Feig (who also wrote) has crafted a funny and likable character for McCarthy in Susan Cooper, a CIA secretary who finds herself thrown into the field. Cooper's penchant for disguise and improvisation allows McCarthy to occasionally flick a switch and unleash the inner firebrand we've seen in previous films. Appearing in virtually every scene, she's an excellent anchor for the madness around her, allowing other actors like Jude Law, Rose Byrne and — yes — Statham to shine.

Feig also takes the surprising but commendable decision to tone down the spoofery, a Bond pastiche theme aside. The story may be nonsense, involving a nuclear MacGuffin, but it holds together, while the action scenes are decent. And if it bears plenty of the hallmarks of the modern American improv-heavy comedy (it's patchy in places, overlong, and at times employs four punchlines when one would have sufficed), when it's funny, which is often, it's *hilarious*. It's been 13 years since Austin Powers yelled his last "Groovy, baby!", and in that time Hollywood hasn't mined the suddenly oh-so-serious spy genre for laughs. This year, with the likes of this and *Kingsman: The Secret Service*, the ban has been lifted. Long may it continue. **CHRIS HEWITT**

Melissa McCarthy makes for one of your less covert operatives.

LIKE THIS,
WATCH THIS



SPIES LIKE US

Dan Aykroyd and Chevy Chase try to recreate the Hope/Crosby *Road To...* chemistry in John Landis' light soufflé, notable for Paul McCartney's theme song, director cameos and a great dick joke.

ALSO OUT



Entourage

★★★

FROM NOW / CERT. TBC

DVD BR A

→ The TV show about movies is now an actual movie, though creator/director Doug Ellin struggles to make this story feel bigger than the ones that ran on HBO. There are cameos from returning favourites (yes, Gary Busey's teeth are back) and all the Ari shoutbursts you expect, but little in the way of surprises. **NDS**



Southpaw

★★★

FROM NOVEMBER 23 / CERT. 15

DVD BR

→ There are all kinds of muscles in Antoine Fuqua's boxing pic, but not a lot of heart. The ripped Jake Gyllenhaal is impressive, though difficult to warm to as down-on-his-luck former champ Billy Hope. And while Fuqua knows his way around a punch-up, the riches-to-rags-to-riches story doesn't have an original bone in its body. **CH**



Ted 2

★★

FROM NOVEMBER 9 / CERT. 15

DVD BR A

→ After a merrily demented Busby Berkeley opening, this Seth MacFarlane sequel falls into every part-two pitfall going. Too long, over-plotty and a lot less funny, the legal-drama schtick of Ted's paternity battle wears thin fast. Saving graces include a Bryan Mills-like Liam Neeson cameo and the best Gollum joke in movie history. **PDS**

ALSO OUT

MORE OF THIS MONTH'S NEW RELEASES

**Poltergeist**

★★

FROM NOW / CERT. TBC

DVD BR A

→ Upgrading Spielberg's ghost-buster with digital-age gimmicks (iPhones, drones, CG devil-squirrels), this remake plays like *My First Scary Movie*: hardly a shock given Gil 'Monster House' Kenan directs. Jared Harris' psychic adds campy value but the static, PG-level horror is so weak, it's a wonder they didn't call it *Paltrygeist*. Boo. **SC**

**Little Accidents**

★★★★

FROM NOW / CERT. 15

DVD A

→ A sombre drama set in a small mining community, where accidental deaths unite and divide the survivors. Sara Colangelo's direction (from her own screenplay) is low-key and thoughtful, never letting the big themes blow up into melodrama or histrionics. And the cast, which includes Boyd Holbrook, Elizabeth Banks and Chloë Sevigny, are uniformly excellent. **OW**

**Beyond The Reach**

★★

FROM NOW / CERT. 12

DVD A

→ Michael Douglas adds to his line-up of wealthy sociopaths, playing a businessman who goes on a hunt, kills a prospector and then tries to fix the blame on his guide (Jeremy Irvine). The cat-and-mouse chase relies almost entirely on coincidence and Douglas' skilled shooter having terrible aim when it helps the plot, but there's always enjoyment to be had from Evil Mike. **OR**

**The Longest Ride**

★★★

FROM NOVEMBER 2 / CERT. TBC

DVD

→ Recuperating rodeo rider Scott Eastwood falls for artsy student Britt Robertson. Meanwhile, in the '40s, recuperating soldier Jack Huston falls for artsy teacher Oona Chaplin. Yep, we are deep in Nicholas Sparks territory, a surfeit of romantic guff and obvious parallels spanning different eras. It's preposterous, but nicely judged and well-played. **IF**

**Turbo Kid**

★★★

FROM NOW / CERT. 18 (iTUNES 15)

DVD BR A

→ Finally, a kids' adventure romp fused with post-apocalyptic horror. The titular hero (Munro Chambers) is a tow-headed teen just trying to get by; Michael Ironside plays baddie Zeus. With astonishing levels of gore and a pastel-hued android, this offers nostalgia-tinged fun, but it's less funny than it should be and is further compromised by an uneven tone. **HOH**

**Dawn Patrol**

★

FROM NOW / CERT. 15

DVD A

→ Mawkish, sexist, racist: this wannabe thriller has it all, and none of it's good. Scott Eastwood is a surfer-turned-Marine being held at gunpoint, who decides to recount his life story to his female captor. The ending's better than what has gone before, and Eastwood is convincingly unlikeable, but the script, direction and score are so awful, it's small comfort. **HOH**

**Song Of The Sea**

★★★★★

FROM NOVEMBER 2 / CERT. PG

DVD BR A

→ Studio Ghibli may be on hiatus, but fans of gorgeous, emotional animation are still getting their fix thanks to Irish artist Tomm Moore and his studio, Cartoon Saloon. Their follow-up to *The Secret Of Kells* delves into Celtic mythology, its poignant, enchanting tale played out by a family with a dark backstory, plus a metric ton of ridiculously cute seals. **NDS**

**Manglehorn**

★★★

FROM NOVEMBER 2 / CERT. 12

DVD BR A

→ Hot on the heels of *St. Vincent* comes Al Pacino's grouchy-man-with-cat character study. As if his surname wasn't improbable enough, it turns out A. J. Manglehorn is a locksmith who frequents hip-hop clubs and talks to his feline, Miss Fanny. But David Gordon Green's indie is a winning, if sleepy, little film, with Pacino on fine form and a moving climax. **NDS**

**Cartel Land**

★★★★

FROM NOW / CERT. 15

DVD A

→ Exec-produced by Kathryn Bigelow, this bullet-dodging peek inside Mexico's cartel nightmare proves as nerve-frazzling as *Zero Dark Thirty*. Toggling between two story strands — a vigilante group in Mexico and a US war vet patrolling the Arizona border — it's a documentary with more shades of grey than E. L. James could imagine. **NDS**



ADVENTURES IN STREAMING

EACH ISSUE, OUR INTREPID WRITER FOLLOWS NETFLIX'S COMPUTER-CALIBRATED RECOMMENDATIONS, GOING WHEREVER THE TRAIL LEADS

WORDS SIMON CROOK

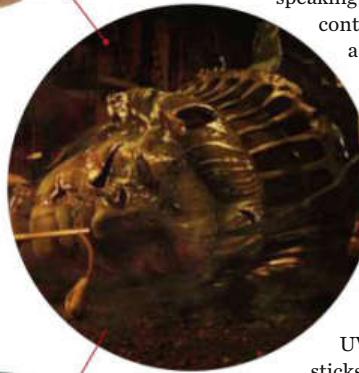
Found Footage

IN THE NEW DIGITAL democracy, anyone with a phone is a filmmaker. Hence the unrelenting rise of the found-footage movie: cheap to make, plausible to audiences and, I'd argue, a legit 21st-century film movement. When they work, they pack a raw, illicit immediacy that's tough to shake off. When they don't, you wish they'd kept the lens cap on. Still, I'm a sucker for them, and Netflix boasts quite a collection. For the optimum shaky-cam reader experience, sit on a washing machine mid-spin cycle. Don't attempt anything above 1,600 rpm — the words will fall off the page.

First up: *The Blair Witch Project* — a film I've avoided since 1999, primarily to protect the memory of its aftershock. Two things strike second time around. First, Heather's "I'm sorry" speech is one of horror's most iconic close-ups. And second, unpeeling the myth doesn't provide any answers but it does fire the imagination. One fan theory claims it's the Blair Witch holding the camera in the basement — and the idea stands up like the hairs on your neck. This is found footage at its best: believable characters, real-time dread and a stylistically justified shuddering style.

Devil's Backbone Texas is the kind of seen-it-jumped-it *Blair Witch* clone that wrecks the form's rep. Here we get director-star Jake Wade Wall unravelling who his estranged dad *really* was by dragging friends to his deserted ranch. Mistaking convolution for ambiguity, *Backbone's* legend is scattered with narrative litter it never bothers picking up, lobbing in ghosts, gold mines, Nazis, Navajos, even a hint of chupacabra... Unforgivably, the finale opens a trap door to the Land Of Stupid — the twist is such a forehead-slapper it makes the it-was-all-a-dream cop-out seem the model of credibility.

Shot for \$25 million, *Cloverfield* is still the priciest found-footage film, and arguably the simplest: a *Godzilla*-esque invasion witnessed from Ground Zero, rumbling with 9/11 urgency (the unsubtle working title was *I-18-08*). Buried by the spectacle, the cast come off as refugees from



an apocalyptic Doritos ad, but it's an alarmingly effective example of the *Jaws* Paradox — a gargantuan threat that remains unseen, teased out in pinches and glimpses. Well, up until the final reveal: the monster looks like a Rancor humped a cargo-crane.

Multimedia mystery *Banshee Chapter* isn't strictly speaking a found-footage movie — although mind-control experiments caught on crackly VHS play a key part. Delving into a friend's death,

Katia Winter unwisely imbibes a dose of MKUltra — a CIA hallucinogen that doesn't so much unlock Huxley's doors of perception as crash open a Lovecraftian gateway. Joining Winter is the ace Ted Levine, channelling gonzo acid-head Hunter S. Thompson. *Banshee* has some fantastic ideas fabricated from conspiracy culture (including a spooky short-wave broadcast clearly inspired by the infamous UVB-76 signal). If the fuzzy horror never quite sticks, the sound design's a keeper. The entity-inviting transmission sounds like an ice-cream van reversing off a cliff.

After five-and-a-half hours of non-stop shaky-cam, my eyes are bouncing like an electrocuted Cookie Monster, but Netflix's final offering is a freaky treat. *Creep*, one of this year's horror anomalies, proves there's still plenty of battery-life in the mock-doc camcorder. After posting an ad on Craigslist, Patrick Brice's videographer arrives at a remote mountain lodge. His client, Mark Duplass, is dying and keen to shoot a video diary for his unborn son. Within five minutes of meeting, Duplass is naked, in the bath, miming 'Tubby Time' with an invisible baby — then things get *really* weird.

Let's leave it at that: the less you know about this fiercely deceitful two-hander, the better.

Found-footage films aren't exactly known for their sense of humour, but *Creep* is one warped hyena, frothing with inappropriate laughter and nervy shudders, all generated from Duplass' frighteningly plausible sociopath. Watch it and tell me Peachfuzz doesn't deserve his own *Muppet*-style franchise. Oh God, I'm giving them ideas again...



NEW TO STREAMING

Sky Captain And The World Of Tomorrow

★★★

FROM NOVEMBER 29 / CERT. PG

N

FUTURE IMPERFECT



AN A FILM BE important, even a landmark, without being particularly great? The case that it *can* is put forward strongly by 2004's *Sky Captain And The World Of Tomorrow*.

After all, it's a film that helped change the belief in what CGI could do. In 1999, first-time director Kerry Conran toyed with a method of realising whatever the human mind could imagine: shooting actors against blue screens and filling in the sets around them later. It was a technique he'd been experimenting with at home, using a cheap computer and bed sheets. If George Lucas was

They wondered if this was worth a punt on *Antiques Roadshow*.

doing something similar down the road with the Star Wars prequels, Conran managed to make a whole film for less than Lucas spent texturing Jar Jar Binks' trousers. *Sky Captain* democratised the visual-effects movie.

Judged in isolation, it is merely a cute film with an awful lot of flaws, if one with enough charm and zip to make you forgive many of them. Reflecting Conran's childhood obsessions, it's a retro-futuristic *Boy's Own*-style adventure. In 1939 – but a version of 1939 with flying robots and people travelling to work by blimp – crime-fighting pilot Joe Sullivan (Jude Law) teams up with, and flirts with, newspaper reporter Polly Perkins (Gwyneth Paltrow), setting out to foil the evil scheme of a mad scientist. The details of that scheme are rather hard to fathom, and a lot of the dialogue used to explain it thuds as if crudely translated from another language, but there's a beautiful misty sheen to the imagery and a constant sense of invention. Above all, enthusiasm and a love for movies rings through.

Sky Captain is a film made by film nerds for other film nerds. There are nods to classics big and small, including *The Wizard Of Oz* and Fritz Lang's *The Testament Of Dr. Mabuse*. It revels in cinematic escapism, its success not in perfecting the story it set out to tell or even in mastering the technology it pioneered, but in the spirit of its optimistic hero. It's not hard to imagine other filmmakers being inspired by it to dream up their own worlds of tomorrow. **OLLY RICHARDS**

ALSO STREAMING

**BLACKHAT**

Chris Hemsworth furrows his brow and hacks into the mainframe in Michael Mann's slick cyber-thriller. It's lesser Mann, and is often ridiculous, but there is a cracking shoot-out, Hemsworth is solid, and nobody makes this stuff look better. **FROM NOVEMBER 27, CERT. 15**

**THE FRENCH CONNECTION**

Gene Hackman yelling, "Poughkeepsie!" and a blistering car chase (filmed in real traffic) are just two reasons to catch William Friedkin's 1971 classic. It is, to our minds, the finest movie to feature a man named Popeye. **FROM NOVEMBER 11, CERT. 18**

**INHERENT VICE**

Paul Thomas Anderson's take on Thomas Pynchon's novel sees an LA detective embark on a complex case that makes *The Maltese Falcon* look like Big Bird. Veering between slapstick and comedy, it's as black as the soles of Joaquin Phoenix's feet. **FROM NOVEMBER 13, CERT. 15**

**AGENTS OF S.H.I.E.L.D.: SEASON 2**

The first season of the Marvel spin-off started shaky but rallied at the end. Its second year is more consistent, boosted by the 'Inhumans', a race of humans altered by the Kree. **FROM NOVEMBER 1, CERT. PG**

**IT FOLLOWS**

David Robert Mitchell's deliberately paced horror, in which Maika Monroe is relentlessly hunted by a shape-shifting demon after having sex, is a clever twist on all those '70s stalk 'n' slash flicks in which girls are punished for rumpy-pumpy. **FROM NOVEMBER 29, CERT. 15**

**THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE**

What would life be like if Germany had won World War II? Amazon's new sci-fi serial, the pilot of which streamed to great acclaim last year, explores that idea, pitting a young girl (Alexa Davalos) against the future-Reich. **FROM NOVEMBER 20, CERT. 12**

**FORCE MAJEURE**

Realising that an avalanche is imminent, a husband legs it, leaving his family behind at a ski resort. Swedish filmmaker Ruben Östlund delivers a mesmerising drama with lashings of dark wit, as a relationship is rocked to its core. **FROM NOVEMBER 29, CERT. 15**

THE CRIB SHEET

ALAN PARTRIDGE

AS *MID MORNING MATTERS* RETURNS TO SKY ATLANTIC ON NOVEMBER 3, OUR HERO'S FINEST MOMENTS NICK DE SEMLYEN



SEASON GUIDE

THE SUMMARY

ALAN TRIUMPH

ALAN CRISIS

FASHION DISASTERS

ICONIC QUOTE



THE DAY TODAY
(1994)



KNOWING ME
KNOWING YOU WITH
ALAN PARTRIDGE
(1994)



I'M ALAN
PARTRIDGE
(1997-2002)



MID MORNING
MATTERS
(2010-)



ALAN PARTRIDGE:
ALPHA PAPA
(2013)

Spoof of current affairs shows, fronted by bellicose newsreader Christopher Morris (Chris Morris) and introducing Alan Partridge (Steve Coogan) as an incompetent sports reporter. Alan creates uncomfortable situations with interviewees and clashes with onlookers.

Commentating at the races. His enthusiasm is such that he gets distracted from the horses and starts remarking on a lady eating a sandwich.

Unveiling his Peter Snow-style Soccermeter. Set to explain the World Cup group system, it turns out to be hugely complicated, sending its creator into a rage spiral.

Alan dons a ratty-looking trench coat for his on-the-ground work. In the studio he's all business, alternating Pringle sweaters with an emerald blazer and clashing shirt.

"TWAT! That was liquid football!"

Alan gets his own chat show, complete with studio inspired by the lobby of a top international hotel. Over the course of seven episodes, everything that can go wrong does, with Alan beset by rogue clowns, defecating horses, anecdote-less guests and a recalcitrant house band.

Securing hero Roger Moore for an exclusive interview. Said interview has to be conducted on the phone and features only two words from Rog ("Hello, Alan"), but it still counts.

The most serious occurs in the final episode, when Alan accidentally kills a food critic. In his memoirs, he recalls that this stopped him from opening a World Of Leather store.

In a special Paris-set episode, Alan dazzles viewers with a video montage of his 'look'. Who else could team horizon-blue stay-crease action slacks with string-back driving gloves?

"We've got so much chat, I'm going to have to get my icepick out and scale the north face of Chat-mandu."

Sitcom following Alan's quest to get back on TV. Now living in the Linton Travel Tavern and working for Radio Norwich, his friends number Michael the Geordie (Simon Greenall), put-upon PA Lynn (Felicity Montagu) and later Ukrainian girlfriend Sonja (Amelia Bullmore).

Mounting a Bond-movie marathon in a static caravan, with planned pauses for strawberry Nesquik, fishcakes and "a dump".

Failing to wangle a second BBC series. His lunch meeting is excruciating to watch, but at least it gave the world *Youth Hostelling With Chris Eubank* (now an actual thing).

Most upsetting are Alan's too-revealing gym shorts, which he's owned since 1982. As he points out to a distressed Lynn, "They did have an underpant lining, but it's perished."

"Dan! Dan! No, he's not seen me. I'll get him later. DAAAN!"

Shot from the webcam in Alan's radio studio, this ongoing set of 15-minute episodes follows his daily travails. Key characters include Sidekick Simon (Tim Key), a lovable but useless comedy foil, and his successor Zoe (Pippa Duffy), on whom Alan develops a powerful crush.

Bringing a touch of sophistication to North Norfolk's airwaves with an on-air wine-tasting session. "This wine tastes of Chewits!"

Getting tricked by Sidekick Simon into thinking the Inland Revenue is investigating him, and admitting on air that his salary is much lower than he'd claimed.

Episode 6 sees him don a striking bright-blue polo neck, offset by suede gilet and spindly spectacles. Even by Alan's standards, it's a bold move.

"This is a little itty-bitty of Scritti Politti."

In Alan's movie debut, he's still a DJ at North Norfolk Digital but faces a new crisis when fired colleague Pat (Colm Meaney) returns seeking revenge. Turning hostage negotiator, Alan loves the attention but gets shot in the leg and shares a mystical moment with a seagull.

Hosting a radio show from the spot and getting on the news. Arguably the high-point of Alan's life, if you leave out the time he was allowed to shop in Tandy after closing-time.

Losing his trousers and underpants while trying to get back *into* the sieve. Then tucking his todger between his legs, Buffalo Bill-style, to avoid flashing the police.

A *Teen Wolf*-ish baseball jacket combined with high-top trainers and midlife-crisis hair.

"She's a drunk and a racist. I'll tolerate one, but not both."



ALSO OUT

**The Immortal Story**

★★★

1968 / FROM NOVEMBER 9 / CERT. 15

→ Orson Welles' penultimate feature is a gloomy, hour-long yarn about a Macau merchant's dying obsession. The *Citizen Kane* man knew a thing or two about obsession, of course, and while his powers were waning by this point, he still summons an eerie stillness from author Karen Blixen's tale of sexual surrogacy. **PDS**

**Frank Sinatra 3-Film Collection**

★★★★

1945-64 / FROM NOVEMBER 2 / CERT. PG

BR

OL' BLU-EYES

RANK SINATRA WAS the 20th century's key mainstream entertainer. He embraced and transformed new media: radio, long-

playing records, television. In the movies, he balanced artistic endeavours with big, populist pieces. It's no accident that George Clooney, who has exactly the same approach to stardom, inherited Sinatra's *Ocean's 11* franchise. Sinatra was often best in films, such as *From Here To Eternity* and *The Manchurian Candidate*, where he wasn't centre screen. Even in his own vehicles, he liked to be surrounded by pals.

In two of the films here, Sinatra is a sailor on shore leave, sidekick to star-cum-visionary Gene Kelly. George

Sidney's *Anchors Aweigh* (1945) is a strange, overlong feel-good effort best remembered for Kelly's dance routine with Jerry the mouse (as in Tom's buddy). Gorgeous in Technicolor, it's fascinating even in its cringe-making moments, which include Dean Stockwell as a kid desperate to be picked up by sailors and Kathryn Grayson's earsplitting operetta act. Much better — indeed, the best film in the set by a mile — is *On The Town* (1949), directed by Kelly and Stanley Donen, which has three guys dancing and singing through New York locations and a hustle of a plot that covers comedy, romance and outpourings of exuberance. Shy Sinatra has a great comic flirtation with aggressive cabbie Betty Garrett and Kelly stages amazing dances with long-legged Ann Miller and peppy Vera-Ellen.

Completing the set is Gordon Douglas' *Robin And The 7 Hoods* (1964), an indulgent outing for Sinatra's Rat Pack in which Sinatra relaxes and lets Sammy Davis Jr., Dean Martin and Bing Crosby sing most of the songs. An overstuffed, overdecorated black comedy, which resets the story of Robin Hood in 1920s Chicago, the standout work comes from scene-stealing Peter Falk as dumb gang boss Guy Gisborne. Rat Pack cool is in evidence, but so is a casual approach to cinema which suggests the cast is having a party to which they sometimes forget to invite the audience. **KIM NEWMAN**

Top: Sinatra, Jules Munshin and Gene Kelly head off to find some nice girls in *On The Town*.
Above: *Robin And The 7 Hoods*. Will Bing remember his line?
Below: Frank throws some shapes in *Anchors Aweigh*.

**The Cannonball Run**

★★★

1981 / FROM NOVEMBER 30 / CERT. PG DVD BR

→ An embarrassment of '70s/80s legends embark on a wacky race across America in this scrappy but amiable comedy. Burt Reynolds, Roger Moore, Farrah Fawcett, Dean Martin and Jackie Chan are among those making an easy buck from the bawdy collection of in-jokes and outtakes. Warning: contains potentially offensive moustaches. **NA**

**Half Nelson**

★★★★

2006 / FROM NOVEMBER 16 / CERT. 15

→ Compelling early proof of Ryan Gosling's talents comes in Ryan Fleck's bittersweet drama, finally out on Blu-ray. Sensitively realised characters — a crack-hooked teacher (Gosling) and his vulnerable student (Shareeka Epps) — guide an understated script through the literal highs and lows of an unlikely bond, deftly avoiding cliché. **NA**



The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug

★★★★

2015 / FROM NOVEMBER 23 / CERT. TBC

DVD BR

WAR CRAFT

B

ARRING PETER
Jackson locating
test footage of
Sylvester McCoy
windsurfing
across Wellington
Harbour, this is

officially the end of the director's great saga. And while reinstating Thorin's (Richard Armitage) funeral gives more of a sense of completion, the sixth epic has changed the least structurally.

What the extended *Battle* has is extended battle. It revels in it, becoming the goriest Middle-earth movie of all. In mockery of the balletic Legolas moments, James Nesbitt's Bofur calamitously pilots a battle troll, while William Kircher's Bifur finally loses that axe-head from his own head. It is a splatter-happy chase aboard a wagon towed by giant rams that is the biggest reward. Balin (Ken Stott) steers, Dwalin (Graham McTavish) fires bolts at a troll's "yambags" (see the appendices), and the Ben-Hur-style spiked wheel-hubs render orcs literally legless.

Fans will be readily acquainted with the collegiate nuttiness of the copious extras. Between pearls of insight (Lake-town's conflagration was based on the Blitz) are found stars less wise than wiseacre (Cate Blanchett debates whether Ian McKellen's dummy, nicknamed Michael Gambon, gave the better performance). But it is Jackson's bracing honesty (he admits to "winging it") and the unironic joys of going deep into Tolkien that speak truest. Artists Alan Lee and John Howe enthral with their appreciation, rhapsodising over concept art for an abandoned sequence where Gandalf finally defeats Sauron in the petrified Sea of Rhûn. So it could have been longer. **IAN NATHAN**

EMPIRE MOVIE QUIZ

THE JOURNEY IS FINALLY
OVER, BUT DO YOU KNOW
YOUR OIN FROM YOUR
GLOIN?*

QUIZ MASTER NICK DE SEMLYEN



1. Identify the FILM from the theme-song lyrics.

"Some folk we never forget / Some kind we never forgive / Haven't seen the back of us yet / We'll fight as long as we live."

A.....

"Night is now falling / So ends this day / The road is now calling / And I must away."

B.....

"Keep careful watch of / My brothers' souls / And should the sky be filled / With fire and smoke / Keep watching over Durin's sons."

C.....

2. Which RUNE does Gandalf draw on Bilbo's door?



3. Identify the dwarf from the BEARD.



A.....



B.....



C.....



D.....



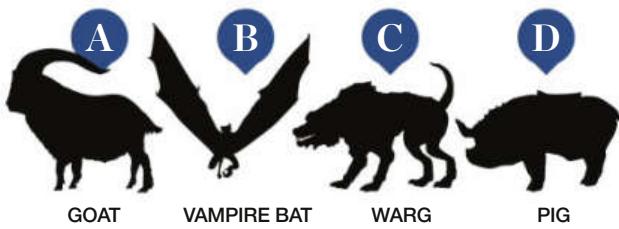
E.....

* UNLESS SPECIFIED, THE QUESTIONS REFER TO THE THEATRICAL EDITIONS, NOT EXTENDED CUTS.

4. Which is the SHORTEST of the films?



5. Match the character to the **CREATURE they ride.**



6. Solve Gollum's fiendish riddle:

“What has roots as nobody sees,
Is taller than trees,
Up, up it goes
And yet never
grows?”



7. How many ORCS does LEGOLAS KILL across the course of the trilogy?

NOTE: TROLLS DON'T COUNT.

**A 12 B 22
C 37 D 49**

8. Name the US talk-show host who cameos in *The Desolation Of Smaug* as a Lake-town spy.



9. Which of these is NOT an actual Orc seen in the films?

**A YAZNEG B KOZMOT C RAGASH
D NARZUG**



10. Only one film has its subtitle spoken as dialogue. **WHICH ONE?**

FOR THE ANSWERS TURN TO PAGE 161

“Michael’s not great on treats, but full of tricks.”

Halloween

1978 / OUT NOW / CERT. 18

DVD BR

KNIFE AND DEATH



ALLOWEEN IS OFTEN VIEWED AS A beginning: the moment a new type of horror arrived to brush away the genre's cobwebs. This isn't exactly true. It was released in the same year as *Dawn Of The Dead*; a year after *The Hills Have Eyes*; and four years after *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre*. George Romero, Wes Craven, Tobe Hooper and David Cronenberg were already making horror in-roads while Carpenter put together a loopy sci-fi (*Dark Star*) and a lo-fi thriller (*Assault On Precinct 13*).

Halloween saw Carpenter join a peer group with which he'd soon be forever associated, but he didn't get there first.

Halloween isn't even the first slasher film (not least because there's barely any slashing and practically no blood). *Black Christmas* probably has that honour, although the sub-genre's roots are in *Psycho*, *giallo* and the splatter films of Herschell Gordon Lewis. Even Hammer had played with proto-slasher tropes in the *Mummy's Tomb* films and *Hands Of The Ripper*. Those progenitors, though, were often whodunnits. *Halloween* reveals its murderer in the first scene, and is one of the first films in which the killer is barely explained. We'd had cannibal clans, serial killers, zombies and ancient Egyptians, but Michael Myers, despite having a name, is conceived more or less as simply an entity. In the credits he's listed only as The Shape.

Donald Pleasence — cast as the elder statesman in a film full of new faces (Christopher Lee turned it down) — told Carpenter he didn't understand the screenplay. You can sympathise. On paper, Myers makes little sense. Having spent much of his childhood and all of his adolescence in an asylum,



1 Jamie Lee Curtis' first film role, as Laurie Strode, made her a scream queen for life.

2 Mike Myers, aka The Shape, with his iconic Shatner mask and kitchen knife.

3 Donald Pleasence as wise doctor Sam Loomis.

WORDS
OWEN WILLIAMS

he nevertheless knows how to drive and has the ability to knock out phone lines. Over the course of the film he is blinded, stabbed and shot, seemingly to no effect, despite his being set up as explicitly not supernatural. In the film's dialogue he is much talked about, but the premise is about who he is, not *what* he is. In his boiler suit and Shatner mask, he seems to arrive fully formed: both twisted man-child and elemental boogeyman. The sequels will pick endlessly over his true nature — he's Laurie's brother; he's the product of a mad druidic cult; he's haunted and controlled by his dead mother and his younger self — but the original *Halloween*'s purity is that Michael Myers just *is*. “The evil has escaped,” says Dr. Loomis. Evil is enough.

So, it's easy to miss that there are actually establishing scenes for the outfit and the face. The overalls have come from the unfortunate owner of the Phelps Garage truck that Pleasence finds abandoned. The mask comes from a break-in at a hardware store that stocks Halloween gear (although that seems to happen after we've already glimpsed Michael in full kit). There's also an element in this original film that the sequels barely, if ever, pick up on or run with. October 31 is important, not just as a Myers anniversary and a date for the carnage, but for the character of Michael himself. Throughout this film, he's a prankster: not great on the treats front,

but certainly full of tricks. He hides in a cupboard, plays dead, dresses in a sheet. “It's Halloween: everyone's entitled to one good scare,” says Sheriff Brackett. Michael obviously agrees. He even sets his victims up in gruesome tableaux with his murdered sister's headstone. Surprise!

Counter-intuitively, it's these oddities that make the film bite. Superficially a straightforward affair — Carpenter says its pure simplicity was key — the film gets stranger the deeper you dig. Why does Loomis visit the graveyard? Just how big is Haddonfield? Critics have looked for meaning and metaphor, reaching for rot at the heart of suburbia (later the underbelly of *Elm Street*) or the fact that the promiscuous girls die first. But these theories are awkwardly mapped onto a film that determinedly provides no answers. Jamie Lee Curtis' unusual ‘final girl’, for instance, doesn't have sex during the movie, but is as interested in boys as her friends (the object of her affection, Ben Tramer, singularly fails to get lucky in *Halloween II*). And while she appears frumpy on the surface, she's rebellious enough to smoke weed in the car, and we're given no sense that it's under peer pressure.

So don't approach *Halloween* expecting sense. Do expect suspense. The pace is measured, with long, quiet sequences and lengthy walks and drives. Each moment is stretched as long as possible. Even the best scares are muted: there's no fanfare on the soundtrack when Myers sits up behind Curtis, and no sound at all as he stares at a hanging corpse like a baleful hound. There are no elaborate kills here. Just a prowling Panaglide camera rig and a few tinkering notes from a Moog Modular III. When you're John Carpenter, that's all you need.

The Cat And The Canary

1939

★★★



FROM NOW

CERT. PG

DVD

→ Bob Hope's breakthrough was in this horror-com, unleashing his wisecracking cowardy-custard in a booby-trapped bijou mansion. This is mock-gothic in both style and script. Black cats, cellars, paintings with shifty eyes... every genre cliché gets shot down by Hope's zinging sarcasm. Sample gag: "Dead people come back." "What, like the Republicans?"

The Conquest Of The Air

1940

★★★



FROM NOW

CERT. U

DVD

→ Alexander Korda's oddest folly is a docudrama chronicling the history of flight, from Icarus to Spitfire. Shot over five years, the detail's astonishing (each machine was lavishly constructed), but the spectacle is flattened by pompous narration. You half-expect an exam post-credits. Fascinating moments, but as entertainment it soars like an ostrich.

The Wages Of Fear

1953

★★★★★



FROM NOVEMBER 23

CERT. PG

DVD BR

→ The original *Speed* — dip below 40mph and Yves Montand's nitroglycerin-loaded lorry goes boom. Drenched in death and desperation, Henri-Georges Clouzot's cold-sweat classic works as both capitalist allegory and white-knuckle thriller, turning the banal act of a truck reversing into an epic of agonising suspense. Needless to say, this vivid remastering is a must.

Robinson Crusoe On Mars

1964

★★★★



FROM NOVEMBER 23

CERT. PG

DVD BR

→ Light years before *The Martian*, Byron Haskin updated Daniel Defoe's castaway classic as a sci-fi adventure, stranding Paul Mantz on a firebally Mars with a sulky monkey for company. It sounds cheesy, but the vision is deadly serious and often rivetingly sparse. The ingenious matte FX glow in HD.

School For Scoundrels

1960

★★★★



FROM NOW

CERT. U

BR

→ The art of trolling, '60s-style. Literally earning a degree in one-upmanship, Ian Carmichael duels with Terry-Thomas in this class-war satire that is unforgettable settled in cinema's acest tennis match. With not a scene wasted (even the fourth wall-busting ending works), it also boasts the definitive Terry-Thomas sexy rascal: even his car horn is set on wolf-whistle.

Rules Of Engagement

2000

★★★



FROM NOW

CERT. 15

DVD BR

→ In the aftermath of a Yemen massacre, Samuel L. Jackson's colonel finds himself in the dock: killer or hero? Contrasting crystal-clear visuals with moral murk, William Friedkin's drama is troubling rather than rousing, debating combat ethics and state collusion. Shot in 2000, it's also creepily prescient: Friedkin saw the War On Terror coming...

The Man Who Could Cheat Death

1959

★★★



FROM NOW

CERT. 15

DVD BR

→ Lesser Hammer Horror — more a rubber mallet given the soft scares. Fusing Dorian Gray with Dr. Jekyll, Anton Diffring plays a homicidal sculptor cursed by eternal youth (topped up by a dose of bubbling *crème de menthe*). Witnessing the icy Diffring in a non-Nazi role is a rare treat, but the inert, stuffy dialogue proves to be life force-sucking.

Gravity: Special Edition

2013

★★★★★



FROM NOW

CERT. 12

BR

→ In space, no-one can hear Steven Price's Oscar-winning score... This four-disc re-release contains a *Silent Space* cut, stripping Price's music to "enhance" the isolation. It feels a bit like a marketing stunt (and you could save money by dangling from your lounge's ceiling then hitting 'mute'), but there are enough extra goodies here to make this worth a buy.

Grace Of My Heart

1996

★★★



FROM NOW

CERT. 15

DVD

→ Based on Carole King's struggle from songwriter to solo artist, this music-biz dramedy casts Illeana Douglas as CK's alter-ego. She's terrific, but the arc is over-drawn and the saga gets saggy: what starts as a bouncy three-minute single fades into concept-album fuzziness. With spot-on Bacharach and Costello pop pastiches, though, at least the tunes are great.

Gilliamesque: A Pre-Posthumous Memoir

★★★

AUTHOR TERRY GILLIAM / OUT NOW

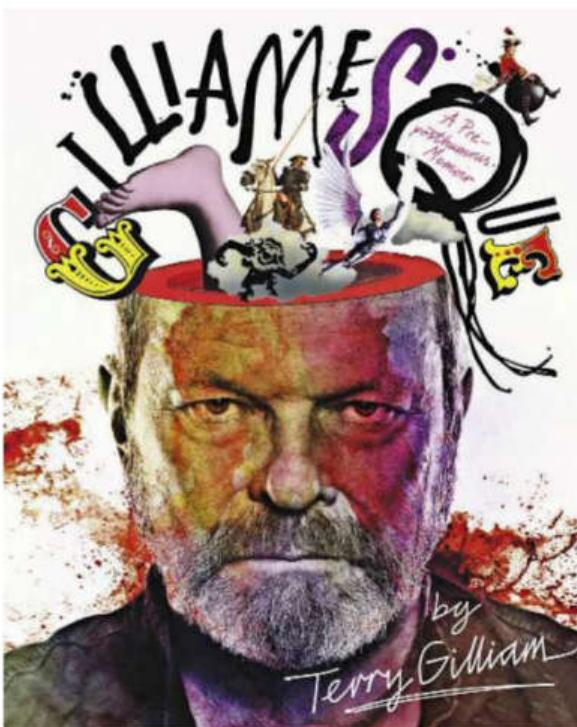
BLABBERWOCKY



NTUESDAY September 8, *Variety* announced the death of director, artist and comedian Terry Gilliam. The next day, Gilliam posted an apology for his expiration on Facebook, urging people not to believe *Variety's* "retraction", and included a mocked-up photo of himself in deathly repose, with a spooky-faced widow holding a sign over him saying, "He was only 30! Bad reviews from *Variety* aged him!"

Which should give a pretty good indication of what to expect from Gilliam's "pre-posthumous" memoir. Blissfully free of misty-eyed reminiscence — instead packed with wry commentary and cheeky wordplay — it is also festooned with his art and photos, plus scrawled margin notes and self-effacing captions. All of which is presented in a handsome hardback which has "ME ME ME ME" stamped in red all over the fore edge. Throughout, he apologises for the egocentric nature of the entire project, but you know he loves it.

Gilliam is brutally honest about the book's origin in an opening "Warning". It was supposed to be a "large, expensive, high-class coffee-table book" of his artwork. Instead, he got too into his Dictaphone-“babbling” and turned it into a "Grand Theft Auto-biography: a high-speed car chase through my life with lots of skids and crashes, many of the best moments whizzing by in a blur." It's an apt description. He whirrs from



Terry Gilliam: not dead, just a bit of a headache.

his rural Minnesotan childhood, to his years as a high-achieving Hollywood high-schooler, to his New York journo days, to his emigration to England, to Python, to his rise as one of the world's most exciting directors, to the collapse of his Don Quixote film, to last year's Python reunion, to his thoughts on (actual) death without taking a single narrative breath.

To be fair, he's aware that plenty has been written about him in the past (see below), and feels no need to go over well-scuffed ground. Which means there's more here on his lesser-known early years than, say, his tussle with Universal's Sid Sheinberg over his masterpiece *Brazil*. Sometimes you wish he'd stick to a subject for longer, as fun as it is riding his recollective torrent. Still, there's no denying that, for a filmmaker who already has a shelf's worth of books devoted to him, it's a joy to finally have one entirely scribbled by the man himself. **DAN JOLIN**

FURTHER READING

WHOLLY TERRY-ER. MORE ON FILM'S MOST ECLECTIC GENIUS



The Battle Of Brazil (Jack Mathews)

Superb, in-depth account of Gilliam's fight to save his creative vision from studio fuck-uppers.



Dark Knights & Holy Fools (Terry Gilliam, Bob McCabe)

A luxurious hardback film-by-film, with a focus on art and design.



Dreams And Nightmares (Terry Gilliam, Bob McCabe)

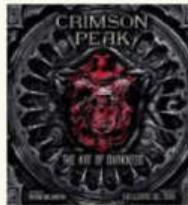
A warts-and-more-warts diary of The Brothers Grimm. Brother, does it get grim.

ALSO OUT

Crimson Peak: The Art Of Darkness

★★★

AUTHOR MARK SALISBURY / OUT NOW



→ If there's one thing you can rely upon from Guillermo del Toro, a man who takes his sketchbook everywhere, it's breathtaking art. And the sumptuous *Crimson Peak* doesn't disappoint. This excellent, erm, peek inside del Toro's gloriously Gothic designs, guided by *Empire*'s Mark Salisbury, is like taking a walk through the mind of the Mexican maestro himself. Bloody beautiful. **CH**

Alien Next Door

★★

AUTHOR JOEY SPIOTTO / OUT NOVEMBER 6



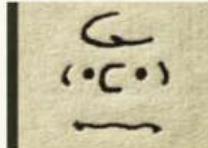
→ Illustrator Joey Spiotto's thing is taking pop-culture phenoms and reimagining them as kids' book covers.

Encouraged by H. R. Giger's positive response to his fake effort *Facehugs For Everyone*, he created a real picture book featuring the Alien as a cute character who breakfasts on 'Promethe-Os' and plays 'Whac-A-Grunt'. It's twisted fun, best bought as a novelty gift for the Ripley or Hicks in your life. **DJ**

Only What's Necessary

★★★

AUTHOR CHIP KIDD / OUT NOW



→ Just before the *Peanuts* movie arrives, *Only What's Necessary* is

a stunning celebration of the depth and artistry of Charles M. Schulz's 65 year-old creation. If the actual strips, marked by uncomplicated clean lines and still heartbreaking wit and insight, are the star, the book augments them with reams of unseen developmental art, correspondence and ephemera. Smart, luxurious and nostalgic, it's a fitting tribute to perhaps the greatest view of childhood in any medium. **IF**

BLACK MASS

TOM HOLKENBORG ON HIS STUNNING MOB-THRILLER SCORE WORDS OLLY RICHARDS

1 Black Mass Opening Title

"This is, 'Welcome to this group of people who will entertain you for the next two hours.' The motif for Whitey (Bulger, played by Johnny Depp) comes through strongest. I extended this track for the album."

2 Boston Crime Lord

"(Director) Scott Cooper wanted a movie about humans you learn are capable of terrible things, not terrible criminals you learn are human. So the approach was to create something organic but very dark."

3 John Connolly

"There's a lot of sound design on the piano that became important. I used it for scenes where Bulger tortures or murders people."

4 Bulger Burial Ground

"There's a spot where Whitey buried all his victims. There's very dark sound design to accompany that location — we beat on the piano with hammers and sticks."

5 My Boy/Don't Wake Him Up

"This was in the movie at an earlier stage, scoring the relationship between Bulger and his son. But the cut changed. Sometimes you think, 'Actually, let's not have music here.'"

6 You Got Two Minutes/Aspirin/No Drugs, No Murder

"This suite is a version of the theme for

Above: Partners in crime Rory Cochrane and Johnny Depp. Below: Tom Holkenborg steps out of the studio.

Connolly (Bulger's FBI handler, played by Joel Edgerton), which starts low and goes higher, then wants to go even higher but gets pulled down. That's his character."

7 I Will Pull The Plug Myself

"Bulger loses someone important. The cue starts emotional but the conversation gets out of control, so it becomes despairing."

8 It's Just The Beginning

"This is the dinner scene where Bulger plays with his colleagues. He's like a cobra, so the music stays quiet."

9 Jimmy And Marianne

"Here the instruments start to separate in frequency and range, at the point where the Winter Hill Gang is breaking up."

10 You'll Be Sorry

"The music is becoming more emotional. Even though these are bad people, you start to feel for some of them."

11 Boston Globe

"As Connolly becomes more isolated, the music becomes grander. We're losing the darkness, focusing on the emotion more."

12 Valhalla/Strictly Criminal

"These are played in a part of the movie where there's no more dialogue. It needed to feel like an adagio, to make you feel the track record of disaster and death that these people left behind."



EMPIRE PLAYLIST



Shootouts

- 1 *Il Triello* Ennio Morricone *The Good, The Bad And The Ugly*
- 2 *Spybreak!* Propellerheads *The Matrix*
- 3 *Calvera's Return* Elmer Bernstein *The Magnificent Seven*
- 4 *Welcome To Tahoe!* Clint Mansell *Smokin' Aces*
- 5 *Machine Gun Lullaby* Ennio Morricone *The Untouchables*
- 6 *Big Daddy Kills* Henry Jackman & John Murphy *Kick-Ass*
- 7 *Somewhere Over The Rainbow* John Farnham & Olivia Newton-John *Face/Off*
- 8 *Shootout In The Cell Bay* John Williams *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*
- 9 *The Man With The Harmonica* Ennio Morricone *Once Upon A Time In The West*
- 10 *I'll Be Back* Brad Fiedel *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*
- 11 *At The Farmhouse* John Powell *The Bourne Identity*
- 12 *Free Bird* Lynyrd Skynyrd *Kingsman: The Secret Service*

TO LISTEN TO THE ABOVE, SEARCH 'EMPIRE MAGAZINE' ON SPOTIFY, OR VISIT OUR YOUTUBE ACCOUNT.



Destiny: The Taken King

★★★★★

OUT NOW / PS3, PS4, XBOX ONE, XBOX 360

BUNGIE JUMPS



PRIOR TO ITS release in September last year, Destiny had been pitched as a revolutionary multiplayer title that would evolve over the course of ten years. The final product was rather more prosaic, and developer Bungie has struggled to prove the worth of its online sci-fi universe in the 12 months since. Two expansion packs – The Dark Below and House Of Wolves – improved things incrementally, but it's not until now that Destiny has begun to deliver.

The Taken King represents Destiny's first major add-on and marks the start of 'Year 2' – a chance for reinvigoration and reinvention after what players have archly referred to as an extended beta phase. It's a much-needed shake-up and shifts the game's structure significantly enough to make actually playing it far more fun. Where levelling a character had been

an exercise in endless repetition, Bungie – now more respectful of players' time – has streamlined in-game progression. The Taken King makes the act of shooting aliens, rather than farming materials, central to how you move forward and new quests with immediate rewards give a constant sense of advancement.

The expansion's titular king is Oryx, a giant demon who wants you dead because you murdered his son. Thankfully, Bungie has paid real attention to the story this time around, drawing you into the tale while injecting moments of humour (largely thanks to a wise-cracking Nathan Fillion) and self-aware eye-rolls at the nonsensical jargon that plagued Destiny's first year. Oryx's giant ship, the Dreadnaught, is the new playable area and is a masterclass in level design: a maze of tight corridors and cavernous halls filled with puzzles, secrets and the game's new enemy faction, the Taken.

New quests continue to crop up after the main story is completed, as well as brand-new strikes – longer missions that require teams of three to complete, such is their difficulty – additional multiplayer maps and modes, and a completely new raid called King's Fall, which is as smart and brutally challenging as the base game's lauded Vault Of Glass.

Some will frown at shelling out full-price for an expansion but this add-on is far more than a few bonus levels. The Taken King places Destiny firmly on a trajectory towards realising its true potential. Welcoming to newcomers (one character gets an instant boost to level 25) while giving veterans a streamlined reworking of the core game they've poured so many hours into, Destiny is finally showing signs of being the revolutionary shooter it first set out to be. **SAM WHITE**



LARA
CROFT GO
iOS/ANDROID

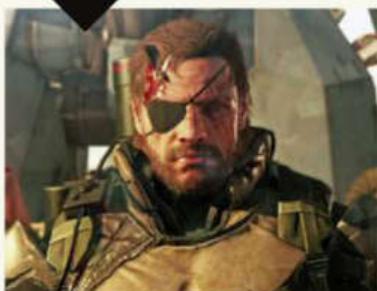
Tomb Raider reimagined as a turn-based strategy game, this follows in the footsteps of Hitman Go and succeeds just as well. The challenge is light, but guiding Lara through a gauntlet of pits, traps and beasts is rarely dull.



STAR WARS:
UPRISING
iOS, ANDROID

An action RPG set just before The Force Awakens, this isn't the most original game to bear the Star Wars label but there's still a compulsive quality to the endless dungeon-crawling, loot-hoarding and blaster-waving.

FRANCHISE EVOLUTION



Metal Gear Solid



METAL GEAR
1987
Groundbreaking gameplay (for the time) as protagonist Solid Snake prevents a bipedal robot from ravaging the world.



METAL GEAR SOLID
1998
Revolutionary new 3D graphics accompanied a gripping story and lots of hiding in cardboard boxes.



METAL GEAR ACID
2004
A mobile incarnation that swapped stealth action for... card-collecting. Obviously.



METAL GEAR SOLID IV: GUNS OF THE PATRIOTS
2008
Longest. Cutscenes. Ever. Many featuring the frying of eggs.



METAL GEAR RISING: REVENGEANCE
2013
Another genre departure, this time for wildly over-the-top swordplay.

EMPIRE

“This will be a day long remembered.”

THE FORCE AWAKENS ISSUE

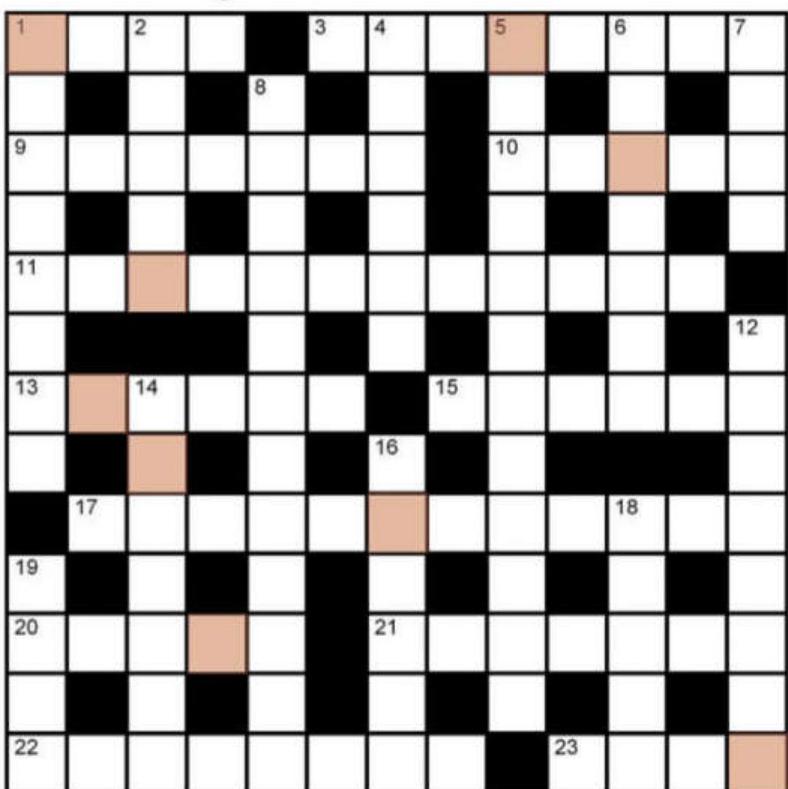
OUT NOVEMBER 26

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THE BEST STAR WARS COVERAGE IN THE GALAXY

THE EMPIRE CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- Pumped by Arnie back in 1977 (4)
- Feline antihero portrayed by Halle Berry in 2004 (8)
- Sandra Bullock and Melissa McCarthy's hot action release (3,4)
- Bernstein discovered amid Ethel Merman (5)
- Dame cast as Maggie Walker in Last Chance Harvey (6,6)
- Avengers foe portrayed by James Spader in 2015 (6)
- Hellraiser Peter — Priam in Troy (6)
- Experimental filmmaker famed for Scorpio Rising (7,5)
- Basketball bonanza that involved Whoopi Goldberg — and Donald Trump! (5)
- Did this 2014 Chris Rock-starrer really go high in the charts? (3,4)
- A 2005 question regarding race relations involving Ashton Kutcher (5,3)
- The title role was played by both Kate Winslet and Judi Dench (4)

DOWN

- This erotic thriller was directed by Jane Campion and co-produced by Nicole Kidman (2,3,3)
- Ryan, or maybe Tatum (5)
- Did this provide Paul Rudd's tiniest role? (3,3)
- Animated Disney film in which John C. Reilly voiced the title character (5,2,5)
- Christopher Nolan's backwards trip — remember? (7)
- Director Ephron discovered in an anorak (4)
- Neil Jordan's remake of Michael Curtiz's 1955 comedy classic (4,2,6)
- Intrepid, like Jeff Bridges in a Peter Weir creation (8)
- It linked Anthony Hopkins, Alec Baldwin and Bart The Bear (3,4)
- Lilo's sometime film partner (6)
- Blaxploitation star Pam (5)
- Simon — though you might think of him as Shaun or even Star Trek's Scotty (4)

Competition ends **November 23**

HOW TO ENTER Take the letters from each coloured square and rearrange them to form the name of an actor, actress, director or character. Text 'EMPIRE' to 83070, followed by your answer, name and address (with a space between each element of your message!). Texts cost 50p plus standard operator costs. Lines close at midnight, November 23. Winners are selected at random. See below for terms and conditions.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: For full Ts and Cs, please go to empireonline.com/competitions/elf. One entry per person. Texts cost 50p + standard network rate. Ask the bill payer's permission before entering. Entries must be received before November 24 or will not be valid (but the cost of the text may still be charged). One winner will be selected at random. Competition promoted by Bauer Consumer Media Limited t/a Empire ("Empire"). Empire's choice of winner is final and no correspondence will be entered into. The winner will be notified, by phone (on the number the text was sent), between seven and ten days after the competition ends. Empire will call the winner a maximum of three times and leave one message. If the winner does not answer the phone or respond to the message within 14 days of the competition's end, Empire will select an alternative winner. Entrants must be over 18, resident in the UK and not be employed by Empire. The prize is non-negotiable with no cash alternative. Empire is not responsible for late delivery or unsatisfactory quality of the prize. Entrants agree to the collection of personal data in accordance with Empire's privacy policy: bauerdatapromise.co.uk/. Winner's personal details will be given to prize provider to arrange delivery of the prize. Bauer reserves the right to amend or cancel these terms or any aspect of the competition (including prize) at any time if required for reasons beyond its control. Any queries, please email empire@bauermedia.co.uk. Complaints will not be considered if made more than 30 days after the competition ends. Winner's details available on request by emailing empire@bauermedia.co.uk. For full Ts&Cs see bauerlegal.co.uk/competition-terms.html.

WIN!

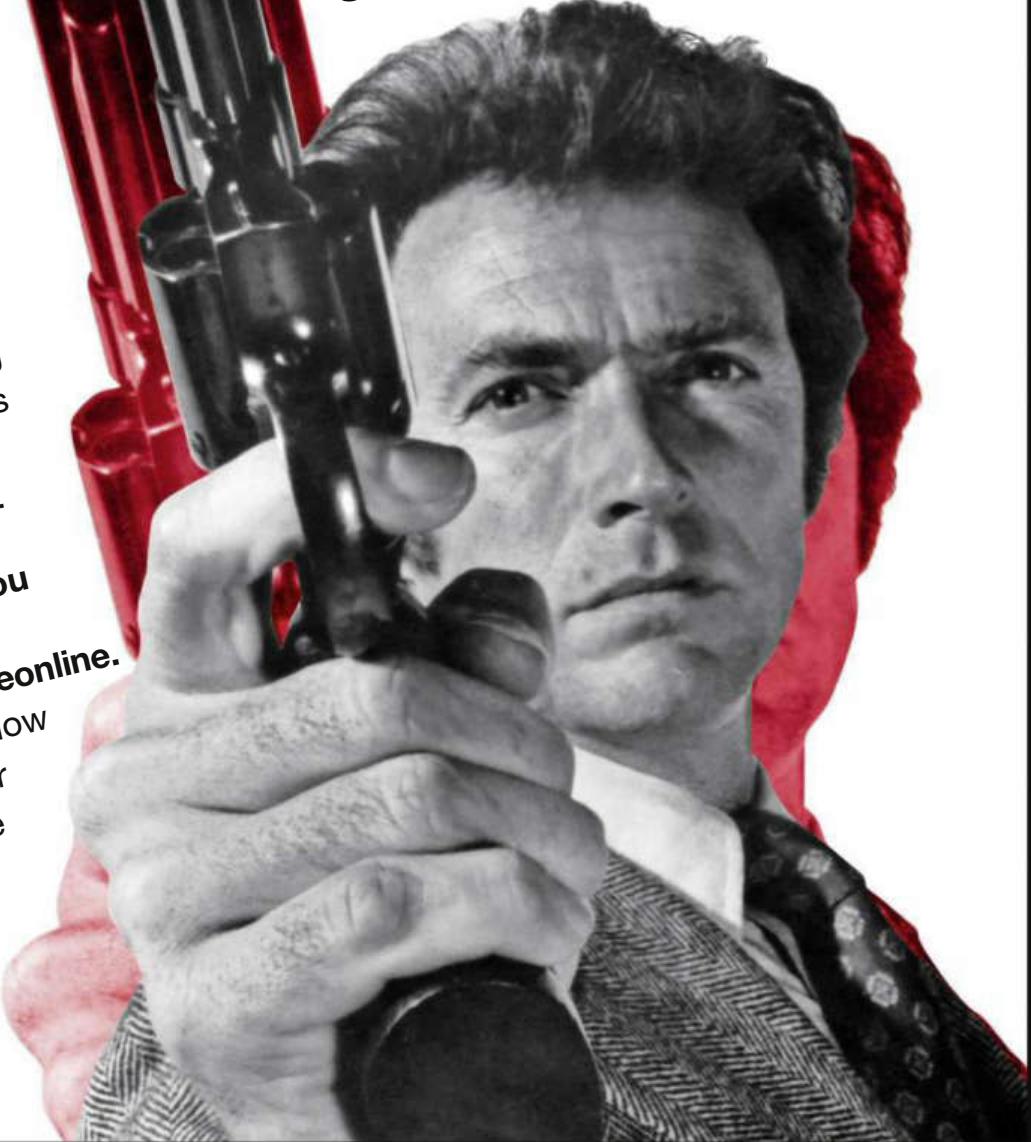
**TWO TICKETS TO *ELF THE MUSICAL*
PLUS A NIGHT IN A LONDON HOTEL!**



LET'S FACE IT, SUMMER IS NOW A DISTANT memory, and as pumpkin flavouring pollutes everything and bonfires sharpen the air, inevitably thoughts turn to Christmas. And how better to get in the mood than the fantastic *Elf The Musical*, currently playing at London's Dominion Theatre? Based on 2003's festive Will Ferrell mega-hit, the show stars Ben Forster (*Jesus Christ Superstar*) and Girls Aloud's Kimberley Walsh and will transform your inner Scrooge into inner sparkle, as orphan Buddy, who initially believes he's an elf (as you do), heads to NYC to find his real father (Joe McGann), aided by Santa himself. We've got two tickets for one lucky winner (with interval drink and programme included), and not only that, we'll throw in one night's stay with breakfast and afternoon tea for two at The Bloomsbury — a swanky London hotel neighbouring the theatre. To be in with a chance of winning this fab prize, just get cracking on the crossword, solve that anagram and text your answer to us via the number below.

ELF THE MUSICAL IS PLAYING AT THE DOMINION THEATRE, LONDON, UNTIL JANUARY 2, 2016.
VISIT ELFTHEMUSICAL.CO.UK FOR MORE DETAILS.

NOVEMBER ANSWERS ACROSS 7 Fletch, 8 London, 9 Demi, 10 And Mercy, 11 Othello, 13 Fight, 15 Lenny, 17 Cushing, 20 Parental, 21 Nell, 23 Fedora, 24 Twelve. **DOWN** 1 Blue, 2 Strike, 3 Cheadle, 4 Blade, 5 Angeli, 6 Rob Cohen, 12 The Waves, 14 Bullitt, 16 Neeson, 18 Hunter, 19 Ethan, 22 Love. **ANAGRAM** Daniel Craig



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1. The person you pick on as a teenager and end up working for as an adult.

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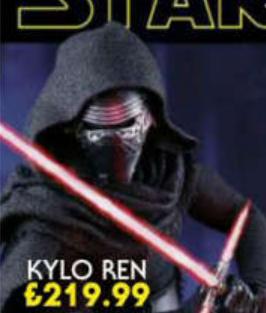
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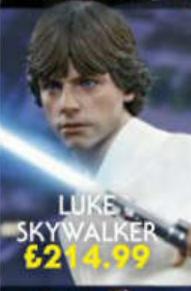
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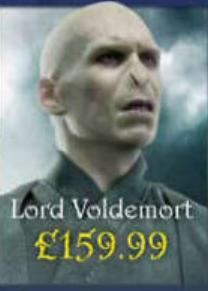
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EMPIRE CLASSIC SCENE

Grizzly Man

"I WILL NOT DIE AT THEIR CLAWS AND PAWS."

SETTING THE SCENE On October 5, 2003, ursine enthusiast Timothy Treadwell was mauled to death by the pack of grizzly bears he had been living with in Alaska. Werner Herzog's acclaimed documentary, by turns funny and chilling, opens with this scene, in which the eccentric Treadwell contemplates his own mortality.

EXT. KATMAI NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE – DAY
Timothy Treadwell is narrating his encounter with two grizzly bears.

Timothy: I'm out in the prime cut of the big green. Behind me is Ed and Rowdy, members of an up-and-coming sub-adult gang. They're challenging everything, including me. Goes with the territory.

He jabs his finger into the air.

Timothy: If I show weakness, if I retreat, I may be hurt. I may be killed. I must hold my own if I'm gonna stay within this land. For once there is weakness, they will exploit it, they will take me out, they will decapitate me, they will chop me into bits and pieces. I'm dead.

He glances over his shoulder, looking at the grizzly behind him.

Timothy: But so far, I persevere. Persevere.

He turns back to the camera.

Timothy: Most times I'm a kind warrior out here. Most times, I am, I am gentle. I am like a flower. I'm like, I'm like a fly on the wall, observing, noncommittal, non-invasive in any way. Occasionally

I am challenged. And in that case, the kind warrior must, must, must become a samurai. Must become so, so formidable, so fearless of death, so strong that he will win, he will win. Even the bears will believe that you are more powerful. And in a sense you must be more powerful if you are to survive in this land with the bear. No-one knew that. No-one ever friggin' knew that there are times when my life is on the precipice of death and that these bears can bite, they can kill. And if I am weak, I go down. I love them with all my heart. I will protect them. I will die for them. But I will not die at their claws and paws. I will fight. I will be strong. I'll be one of them. I will be the master. But still a kind warrior.

Laughing, he blows a kiss at the bear.

Timothy: Love you, Rowdy.

He walks towards the camera.

Timothy: Give it to me, baby. That's what I'm talking about. That's what I'm talking about. That's what I'm talking about.

He pauses.

Timothy: I can smell death all over my fingers.

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